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1999 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development: Globalization, Gender and Work

Report of the Secretary-General

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Preface

A. Background

1. In its resolution 36/74 of 4 December 1981, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General in close collaboration with appropriate United Nations organizations and agencies to prepare a multisectoral and interdisciplinary survey on the role of women in development and submit it to the Assembly at its thirty-ninth session in 1984. In its resolution 36/127 of 14 December 1981, the Assembly requested that the Commission on the Status of Women be consulted in the preparation of the *World Survey on the Role of Women in Development*. In its resolution 37/60 of 3 December 1982, the General Assembly recommended that the *Survey* be submitted to the 1985 World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace. The first *Survey* was published in 1986.[1]

2. In 1985, the General Assembly, by its resolution 40/204 of 17 December 1985, requested that the Secretary-General update the *Survey* on a regular basis, focusing on selected emerging development issues that have an impact on the role of women in the economy at the national, regional and international levels. The second *Survey* was issued in 1989.[2]

3. The third *Survey* was requested by the General Assembly in its resolutions 44/77 of 8 December 1989 and 44/171 of 19 December 1989. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 48/108 of 20 December 1993, a preliminary summary of the *Survey* was provided to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1994 through the Commission on the Status of Women. In accordance with the Commission on the Status of Women resolution 36/8 of 20 March 1992, the *Survey* was one of the principal documents for the Fourth World Conference on Women. It was published in 1995.[3]

4. The fourth *Survey* was requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 49/161 of 23 December 1994. The Assembly requested that the Secretary-General examine the impact of current trends and policies on the overall economic and social situation on women. It further requested that particular emphasis be given to the adverse impact of the difficult economic situation affecting the majority of developing countries, in particular on the condition of women. Special attention was to be devoted to worsening conditions for the incorporation of women into the labour force, as well as on the impact of reduced expenditures on social services and women's opportunities for education, health and child care. Through its review of the status of women, it is intended that the update should contribute to the debate on current goals and strategies for development and their implications for women and society.

5. As in the past, the Executive Summary of the *World Survey on the Role of Women in Development* was submitted to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1999, through the Commission on the Status of Women (E/CN.6/1999/CRP.3).

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[1] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.86.IV.3.

[2] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.89.IV.2.

[3] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.IV.1.

B. Gender and development

6. Since the time of its inception, the United Nations has been involved with issues about women and about equality between women and men. One of the main tasks which the Charter of the United Nations set for the Organization is to define and protect the rights and freedoms of every human being regardless of race, sex, language or religion. The Preamble to the Charter affirms the equal rights of men and women as well as faith in fundamental human rights and the dignity and worth of the human person.

7. The international women's movement, from its beginning, influenced the founding principles and goals of the United Nations with regard to women's rights. The "founding mothers" laid the groundwork for the struggle for gender equality that has since gained momentum throughout the world. Having played a crucial role in the formulation of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, early women activists were, because of their determination and vision, also responsible for the establishment of the Commission on the Status of Women within the United Nations. (Pietila, 1999, p. 44).

8. Today, gender is finally at the centre of development policies, after three decades of struggle. Since 1975, when the World Conference of the International Women's Year was held at Mexico City, the discourse on women's advancement and its relation with the development process has evolved. Essentially, it has shifted in focus from the intellectual and political approach of "women in development" (WID) to the new approach of "gender and development" (GAD). More recently "gender mainstreaming" has emerged as a strategy to promote gender equality.

1. Integrating women into the development paradigm: a brief history

9. The theory of modernization, the predominant paradigm of economic development since the Second World War, postulated that the newly emerging nations of the world could develop by following in the footsteps of developed Western nations. Thus, in the first United Nations Development Decade (1961-1970), much policy was concerned with the transfer of modern technology, especially high-yielding varieties of seeds in agriculture, to developing countries. These policies became popularly known as the "Green Revolution", which yielded a significant increase in agricultural production and productivity in many parts of the developing world. Investment was targeted to areas with a high growth potential, with the assumption that wealth would rapidly accumulate and eventually "trickle down" to poor segments of society.

10. However, the results of the economic growth failed to trickle down. The consequences of modernization and commercialization of agriculture only widened the gap between the haves and the have-nots, and also marginalized various social groups, especially women. Rather than a smooth rise in prosperity, jarring social transformations and turmoil marked the 1960s.

11. In this first United Nations Development Decade, the status of women was not a major topic of concern (Tinker, 1990). Although the General Assembly mandated the Commission on the Status of Women in 1962 to prepare a report on women's role in development, the focus of the Commission was mainly on the humanitarian aspects of development and on women's legal rights, rather than the multifaceted aspects of women and development.

2. Emergence of women in development

12. A new understanding of development began to emerge during the 1970s as the underlying assumptions of modernization theory came under critical scrutiny. Increased attention to questions of social justice, poverty and welfare under the rubric of "basic needs" and "redistribution with growth" broadened the early narrow focus on the technical aspects of economic growth.

13. Integrating women into development efforts was yet another concern that marked the 1970s. The General Assembly included it as an objective in its International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade (1971-1980). Some researchers and practitioners made it a central topic of debate on development, especially after the publication of Ester Boserup's pioneering book, *Women's Role in Economic Development*. During that Decade, attention to women's issues intensified. WID became a field of study, advocacy and practice in its own right (Tinker, 1990).

14. In a period marked by increasing awareness among women, another turning point was the First World Conference on Women in Mexico City in 1975, which began the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace (1976-1985). The successive United Nations women conferences that followed around the world drew an ever-growing number of women. The non-governmental organizations (NGOs) forums held parallel to the intergovernmental conferences at Mexico City in 1975, Copenhagen in 1980 and Nairobi in 1985 attracted, respectively, 4,000, 7,000 and 16,000 participants. Besides energizing research, advocacy and policy efforts in promoting women's rights, these conferences also gave WID official recognition at the intergovernmental level. This, in turn, helped to transform the priorities and perspectives of development practitioners at both the international and national levels.[4]

3. Shift of focus from women in development to gender and development and gender mainstreaming

15. The early discussions on WID focused on two different concerns: that women had either been excluded from the benefits of development, or had been included in ways that had marginalized them. The policy orientation of WID was to use development resources for improving women's conditions and making their contributions visible. While WID programmes did help to improve women's conditions and access to resources, they did not address the basic structure of inequality in the relationship between men and women. These programmes fell short in addressing the inequalities between men and women as they had a tendency to focus solely on *women*. This realization opened a whole new debate and resulted in the wider emphasis placed on the concept of *gender*. The new orientation has eventually paved the way for a new approach called *gender and development* (GAD), within which *gender* as a category of analysis took the central stage.

16. Gender is defined as the social meanings given to biological sex differences. It is an ideological and cultural construct but is also reproduced within the realm of material

[4] One of the significant outcomes of the International Women's Year in 1975 and the subsequent Decade was the establishment of national machineries in a number of countries. By the end of the Decade, 127 Member States had established some form of national machinery, an institution recognized by Governments dealing with the promotion of policy, research and programmes aimed at women's advancement and participation in development. Within the United Nations system, in addition to the already existing Division for the Advancement of Women, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) were established in 1976 to provide the institutional framework for research, training and operational activities in the area of women and development.

practices; in turn, it influences the outcomes of such practices. It affects the distribution of resources, wealth, work, decision-making and political power, and the enjoyment of rights and entitlements within the family as well as public life. Despite variations across cultures and over time, gender relations throughout the world entail asymmetry of power between men and women as a pervasive trait. Thus, gender is a social stratifier, and in this sense it is similar to other stratifiers such as race, class, ethnicity, sexuality and age. It helps us understand the social construction of gender identities and the unequal structure of power that underlies the relationship between the sexes.

17. With this emphasis on gender, the (GAD) approach signals three departures from WID. First, the focus shifts from women to gender and the unequal power relations between women and men. Second, all social, political and economic structures and development policies are re-examined from the perspective of gender differentials. Third, it is recognized that achieving gender equality requires "transformative change".

18. In this conceptual reorientation, the politics of gender relations and restructuring of institutions, rather than simply equality in access to resources, have become the focal points of development programmes,[5] and "gender mainstreaming" has emerged as the common strategy for action behind these initiatives. Gender mainstreaming was first formulated as a "transformative strategy" to achieve gender equality at the Fourth World Conference on Women at Beijing in 1995. In 1997, the Economic and Social Council adopted the following definition, meant as a guide for all agencies in the United Nations system:

> "Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for men and women of any planned action, including legislation, policies and programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality" (Economic and Social Council, agreed conclusions 1997/2).

19. Achieving gender equality requires that gender roles and the basic institutions of society — the market, Government and the family — are reorganized. Thus, in order to bring about an equal partnership between women and men, mainstreaming gender aims at transformative change. That in turn requires women to take an active part in politics and decision-making at all levels of society.

20. To recapitulate, the policy orientation of development, as far as women and development issues are concerned, has undergone three major shifts:

(a) Prior to the emergence of WID, the objective was to improve women's welfare, whereby women were defined mainly in terms of their conventional reproductive roles. Development projects concentrated on literacy courses, home economics programmes, child care and family planning activities. However, welfare and family-oriented programmes, though no doubt valuable, nonetheless had the effect of reinforcing women's traditional role within the family;

(b) With the onset of WID, the recognition of women in their multiple roles, especially their role in economic life, and scrutiny over household division of labour, gave

[5] For a more elaborate discussion of the conceptual shifts in the women-and-development discourse, and the alternative categorization of the two approaches, see Moser (1993) and Razavi and Miller (1995).

rise to equity, poverty and efficiency concerns.[6] Development projects began to view women as active participants rather than passive recipients of development aid. Policy initiatives emphasized women's access to training, credit and employment in order to improve women's contribution to and their capacity to benefit from development. These initiatives did not initially challenge the dominant neo-liberal development paradigm of the 1980s, but soon it became clear that structural adjustment and macroeconomic stabilization policies, being implemented in many countries at the time, were inimical to gender equality. Thus, excessive reliance on market forces and the neo-liberal approach to development gradually came under critical scrutiny.[7] Finally, the realization that markets and other institutions needed to be transformed in order to enhance women's productive and decision-making capacity gave rise to a new orientation, which prevailed in the following decade;

(c) During the 1990s, with the shift to GAD, political rather than economic aspects of development became the focus of concern. Along with gender mainstreaming, empowerment of women emerged as the main issue of concern. Now women were to take the initiative as equal partners in a participatory and "bottom-up" process of development. In this approach, "Empowerment cannot be given, it must be self-generated. All that a gender-transformative policy can hope to do is to provide women with enabling resources which will allow them to take greater control of their own lives, to determine what kinds of gender relations they would want to live within, and to devise the strategies and alliances to help them get there" (Kabeer, 1995, p. 97). So the idea was that transformative change presupposes the empowerment of women.

21. Empowerment, first and foremost, requires awareness which is fed by knowledge. Thus, gender mainstreaming involves a dual strategy. One type of action places gender at the centre of the global agenda. A series of United Nations conferences held around the world, as reviewed below, have been especially effective in this regard. Another type of action is focused on producing gender-aware knowledge, especially in fields that directly concern relevant social and economic policy. An example of the latter from recent years has been the burgeoning work by feminist economists and non-governmental organizations. The *1999 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development* builds on this body of work, and is meant to be a contribution to mainstream gender in our knowledge of economic development.

4. Global conferences and summits of the 1990s

22. The series of United Nations conferences which were convened in different parts of the world were another distinctive feature of the 1990s. In order to create an integrated agenda for development, the international community (both intergovernmental and non-governmental bodies) organized the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)(Rio de Janeiro, 1992); the World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna, 1993); the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) (Cairo, 1994); World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995); the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995); the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) (Istanbul, 1996); and the World Food Summit (Rome, 1996).

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[6] One element of WID focused on poor women and their needs, while another stressed equality between women and men. A third emphasized the efficiency gains that could be realized by eradicating the disadvantages women faced in economic life.

[7] In 1986, with the adoption of the Declaration on the Right to Development, the United Nations defined development as a human rights issue. The Declaration states that "the right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development ..."

23. These conferences succeeded in placing gender equality on the global agenda, while broadening the scope of the gender perspective, by linking it with development and peace issues and by strengthening cooperation between the Commission on the Status of Women and the other functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. Women actively participated at the preparatory stages of the conferences, in the NGO forums and caucuses and as part of the official delegations of the participating countries. Various campaigns launched from the international women's movement mobilized women from all walks of life, who helped to shape the documents produced by each of the conferences (Pietila, 1999).

(a) United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

24. The UNCED document Agenda 21 emphasizes women's role in environmental management and affirms that improvement of their status is a precondition of sustainable development. UNCED called for action to improve women's literacy, education, training, nutrition and health, and for the appointment of women to key decision-making positions in connection with improvement of environmental management. Although Agenda 21 emphasizes the importance of women's active involvement in economic and political decision-making, it does not go far enough in questioning the existing gender division of labour and women's traditional roles in environmental management.

25. In 1997, at its special session for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21, the General Assembly reiterated the need for global partnerships for achieving the environment and development goals set out in the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21. The Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, which was adopted during the special session, called for the participation of women, as equal partners, in economic, social and political development, as well as in all sectors of economy, in decision-making, and in the areas of science and technology.

(b) World Conference on Human Rights

26. The World Conference on Human Rights expressed deep concern over all forms of discrimination and violence against women. It reaffirmed the human rights of women and of the "girl child" as inalienable, integral, universal and indivisible rights. The Conference identified its priority objectives as the full and equal participation of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life. Gender-based violence and all forms of sexual harassment and exploitation, including those resulting from cultural prejudice and trafficking in women, were defined as incompatible with the dignity and worth of the human person. Violence levelled at women in situations of armed conflict, particularly murder, systematic rape, sexual slavery and forced pregnancy, were identified as violations of the fundamental principles of international human rights and humanitarian law.

27. The Conference urged the international community, Governments and civil society to intensify their efforts in protecting and promoting the human rights of women and the girl child. It emphasized the need for collective action towards the elimination of all forms of violence perpetrated against women in public as well as private spheres of life.[8]

[8] Later in 1993, the General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women.

(c) International Conference on Population and Development

28. The Programme of Action of ICPD recommends that Member States ensure (a) women's equal participation and equitable representation in political processes; (b) women's education, employment and skill enhancement; and (c) the elimination of all forms of discriminatory practices that impede women's access to employment, resources and social security. ICPD also spotlighted the issue of gender discrimination within the family, as reflected in the widespread preference for sons and differential treatment of sons and daughters from the very onset of life. Governments were urged to enact measures that prevent female genital mutilation, prenatal sex selection, use of girls in prostitution and marriages that lack the consent of the bride.

29. The right of women to control their own fertility, along with gender equality, women's empowerment and elimination of violence against women, were characterized as being essential parts of any integrated programme of population and development. The ICPD Programme of Action went further by focusing on the role and responsibilities of men in family planning, child care and household chores. In so doing, it set the ground for transforming gender relations and male and female identities.

30. At its special session for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the ICPD Platform for Action, held in 1999, the General Assembly, *inter alia*, put a strong emphasis on gender equality, equity and empowerment of women, including the promotion and protection of their human rights. The General Assembly also recognized the issue of maternal mortality and morbidity as a public health priority, and called for mainstreaming gender perspective in all programmes and policies.

(d) World Summit for Social Development

31. The Copenhagen Declaration of the World Summit for Social Development held that women carry a disproportionately large part of the burden of poverty, unemployment, environmental degradation and war. It emphasized that without women's full participation, social and economic development cannot be sustained, so "equality and equity" between women and men must be a priority issue on the economic and social development agenda.

32. Drawing attention to the deepening poverty in a world of plenty, the Summit focused on new challenges posed by the changing world economic order and their implications for peace and human security. In particular, women's poverty was recognized as a salient feature in both the developing and developed countries. In acknowledging the weight of the problems faced by women, the Summit called for new strategies to enhance women's role at all levels of civil, political, economic, social and cultural life.

33. The Summit was a bridge to the Fourth World Conference on Women, held the same year (1995) at Beijing.

(e) Fourth World Conference on Women

34. The Fourth World Conference on Women was the largest gathering ever held of official Government and NGO representatives. At the official Conference at Beijing, the delegations of 189 Governments included 6,000 participants, while an additional 4,000 accredited NGO representatives, media representatives and United Nations officials brought the total number to some 17,000. The NGO forum at Huairou attracted 30,000 participants from around the world.

35. The Conference adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The Platform for Action upholds the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against

Women, and builds upon the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. The Platform for Action defines itself as an agenda for women's empowerment, with 12 critical areas of concern. Ultimately, its success will depend on strong commitment on the part of Governments, international organizations and institutions at all levels, as well as the mobilization of adequate resources.

36. The 12 critical areas identified in the Platform for Action are: women and poverty; education and training of women; women and health; violence against women; women and armed conflict; women and the economy; women in power and decision-making; institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women; human rights of women; women and the media; women and the environment; and the girl child. By adopting the Platform for Action, 189 Governments committed themselves to implementing the proposed actions.

37. The Platform for Action calls on all parts of the United Nations system to monitor its implementation by the Member States and to integrate a gender perspective in all United Nations policies and programmes (para. 292). In following up the Platform for Action, the Economic and Social Council reviewed progress in the advancement of women at its substantive session of 1999. In addition, in the year 2000, a special session of the General Assembly will be convened to assess the extent to which Governments have fulfilled their commitments made at Beijing.

(f) United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)

38. As the "city summit," Habitat II dealt with two main themes: "Sustainable human settlements in an urbanizing world" and "Adequate shelter for all." The Conference was convened in partnership among United Nations bodies, Governments, local authorities, municipal agencies, individual professionals and researchers, the private sector, private non-profit organizations, NGOs, community-based organizations, labour unions and parliamentarians. The Women's Caucus, one of the most organized of the lobbying groups at Habitat II, monitored the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in all final documents and the safeguarding of the gains made at Beijing.

39. The Habitat Agenda and Istanbul Declaration set broad policy guidelines and called for commitments by Governments to improve living conditions in human settlements and to acknowledge and act on the right to housing. Debate on issues of gender equality affirmed that a gender perspective should be adopted in the design and implementation of all policies and programmes in the area of sustainable human settlement development, throughout the Habitat Agenda. Gender equality was also accepted as a goal in human-settlement development. Habitat II called for meaningful recognition and valuing of unremunerated work, the collection and dissemination of sex-disaggregated data, and measures to ensure equal participation of women in planning and decision-making in each country.

(g) World Food Summit

40. The World Food Summit acknowledged the decisive role that women play in household and national food security — that, in so doing, women are critical to the elimination of poverty. The 1996 Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action urged Governments to "ensure an enabling political, social, and economic environment designed to create the best conditions for the eradication of poverty and for durable peace, based on full and equal participation of women and men, which is most conducive to achieving sustainable food security for all" (p. 10). Towards this end, Governments committed themselves to promoting gender equality and empowering women, through various means, including (a) implementing commitments made at the Fourth World Conference on Women; (b) mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and

programmes; (c) ensuring equal access to productive resources and services; (d) improving the collection, dissemination and use of sex-disaggregated data in agriculture, fisheries, forestry and rural development; and (e) gathering information on women's traditional knowledge and skills in agriculture, fisheries, forestry and natural resources management.

41. All told, the conferences and summits of the 1990s and their five-yearly reviews were crucial in raising gender awareness in the world, as they had the cumulative effect of placing gender at the centre of international discourse on policy-making relating to environment, population, human rights, food security and social development.

5. The case for making economics gender-aware

42. Various studies spearheaded by feminist economists point out that almost all societies use gender as the basis for division of labour: women generally are responsible for "reproductive" work[9] — to maintain and strengthen the social fabric — while men are mainly engaged in "productive" work which is remunerated in the market. Social, rather than biological, reasons which pertain to gender relations account for this pattern. In this sense, the studies describe gender identities for both men and women, and say that men and women are both affected by gender relations but not in the same way. They criticize mainstream economics for restricting the notion of work to that which is remunerated, thereby ignoring gender differences in economic life.

43. The lack of remuneration for reproductive work, as for other forms of non-market activity performed by unpaid labour, does not stem from the nature of the activity itself but from its social and economic context. In principle, reproductive work (and "caring" labour in general) could be replaced by paid services procured in the market. Someone might be hired to perform the work, if income, market conditions and personal inclinations permitted. In fact, some types of reproductive activities, such as education or health care, are performed by the state or the private sector, with the use of paid labour to varying extent in different societies.

44. Every society has to devote a part of its total labour resources to its upkeep and reproduction (Beneria, 1979) and (Picchio, 1992), regardless of whether the market is the main organizing principle of the work or not. Reproductive work may be economically invisible, because much of it is unpaid, but that does not mean that it comes without cost. It is misleading to exclude reproductive work (and caring labour) from economic calculations because of its non-market nature. Women are more severely affected by the lopsided distribution of unpaid work between the sexes (UNDP, 1995, p. 88);[10] but, as the *Survey* describes in the following pages, society as a whole pays a price in reduced economic growth.

45. If the objectives are equitable sharing of the costs of unpaid reproductive labour between women and men, and gender equality in general, the first step must be an accurate and realistic system of social accounting. Reproductive and caring work must be made visible at the social level, and the role of gender in economic development should be well understood. That requires a gender-aware approach to economics, of which the present *Survey* is an example.

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[9] Reproductive work involves mostly domestic work; care of children, the elderly and the sick; voluntary community work; and subsistence (own use) production.

[10] The *Human Development Report 1995* remarks that men receive the lion's share of income and recognition for their economic contribution, while most women's work remains unpaid, unrecognized and undervalued.

Introduction

A. Globalization, gender and recent labour market trends

46. The major world economic trend of recent years is the movement towards a globally integrated economy. In all parts of the world, the economic environment within which businesses, Governments and individuals make decisions increasingly includes the international dimension. The forces of globalization are real and their influence is felt everywhere, for better or worse. Vast sums of money are now transferred across international borders in the financial markets every day, far exceeding the value of goods and services traded internationally. Trading in financial assets has reached immense proportions, and as the East Asian crisis has revealed, failures in financial markets can cause severe dislocations in the real economy around the globe. Many business corporations now plan on a global scale, dispersing the different segments of their operations among different cost sites and outsourcing the manufacturing of products and raw materials internationally. Law, accountancy and management consultancy firms, along with many other service sector businesses, are also going international to implement international mergers and acquisitions around the world and to audit and advise businesses which are run globally.

47. The cultural, political and social correlates of increasing international integration have not been any less important. Populations around the world are being familiarized through economic exchange and exposure to advertising, the media and telecommunications, to a culture of instant gratification through material consumption. Additionally, globalization is tied to momentous political changes of the present era, such as the rise of identity politics, international civil society, new forms of governance and the universalization of human rights.

48. Globalization has become a catch-all term used to refer to these various phenomena and to the processes of change towards global economic integration. It lacks a neat definition. In terms of its economic dimension, the term usually covers the closely related but distinct economic concepts of openness or liberalization, integration and interdependence. It thus entails a movement towards a world economy characterized by free trade, free mobility of both financial and real capital, and rapid diffusion of products, technologies, information and consumption patterns. But even this relatively narrower economic definition refers to numerous elements that are in flux, identified and assessed differently by different observers.

49. In the age of globalization, the economic policy environment has changed radically as well. Over the last 20 years, Governments' policy choices in relation to international trade and financial flows have decidedly shifted in favour of greater openness. This has paved the way for global integration and has also been a response to the forces unleashed by globalization.

50. It is not surprising, therefore, that economic effects of economic integration now impinge with greater force than ever on individuals, both as workers and as consumers. In rich countries and increasingly in poorer countries, consumers' expenditure choices have come to include goods made in other countries. As identical or similar products and services have become accessible to consumers around the globe, patterns of consumption and life styles have tended to converge, and new hybrid identities have begun to emerge. Changes taking place in the realm of work have been equally far-reaching in scope, and increasingly, work is created in newly internationalized activities. Just as some businesses and their workers have prospered with the new opportunities created by globalization, many others

failed in the face of international competition, putting the livelihoods of employees, contracted outworkers and local suppliers in jeopardy.

51. Much of the controversy about globalization stems not from disagreement about the nature of the changes under way but from disagreement about their social and economic impact. While some observers are persuaded by the beneficial character of globalization, others see the potential benefits dwarfed by much actual harm, and thus give greater weight to risks involved. The latter argue that the rewards and costs of economic change are not distributed evenly between as well as within nations. They are alarmed by increased poverty around the globe and greater inequality between regions, income groups and sexes. If anything, the cautious attitude towards globalization has been strengthened by the East Asian crisis, as it became clear that greater integration to the world economy increases vulnerability to outside shocks. Early evidence from the region suggests that the cost of economic crisis is being disproportionately borne by women, just as it had been the case during the structural adjustment programmes which many developing countries undertook in the 1980s.

52. In the past, the gender impact of economic integration was assessed, in addition to its effect on women's increasing burden of unpaid work, by studying the gender-differentiated employment effects of trade liberalization and expansion in developing countries. It is by now well established that economic integration has been strongly associated with increased employment of women in the paid, non-agricultural labour force in many developing countries since the mid-1970s. The main features of these employment effects were identified and examined in the *1994 World Survey*. New empirical evidence that has since emerged, though mainly supportive, allows these employment effects to be understood in a broader perspective. For instance, evidence from several countries suggests that economic integration has also been responsible for significant losses in female employment. More importantly, as the recent shift of terminology from "international integration" to "globalization" indicates, in the last few years our perspective has been changing rapidly along with the world economy. It is now more fully appreciated how the nature and organization of work itself, not just its regional and sectoral distribution by gender, have been going through a marked transformation around the globe.

53. While the *1994 World Survey* discussed mainly the employment effects of economic integration, the present *Survey* focuses on how globalization has been transforming the world of work from a gender perspective.

54. Labour market *flexibility, casualization* and *informalization* of employment, and proliferation of what are variably called *atypical, precarious,* or *contingent* jobs are some of the phrases that are commonly used to describe the salient aspects of these changes. Though more or less a global trend, the set of changes that are summarized under the heading *flexibilization* of labour, and their gender effects, have varied in different countries with their levels of development, socio-economic structure and particular form of integration within the world economy. They have interacted with secular trends in falling fertility rates, rising educational attainment of women, increasing urbanization and changing family structures, among others. For instance, a comprehensive study has found that a whole array of variables, including the organization and structure of production, labour market regulations, the system of workplace training and education, social attitudes and values concerned with gender roles, have influenced recent trends in women's participation in paid employment in different countries (Rubery and Fagan, 1995). Moreover, within individual countries, the trend towards *flexibilization* of labour has had quite disparate, even polarizing effects on women of different ages, classes and levels of education. This makes it

exceedingly difficult to generalize about the gender impact of globalization which is equally applicable between and to different groups within countries and regions.

55. However, in the midst of all this diversity, certain similar patterns can nonetheless be identified in how different groups of countries adapted to economic adversity during episodes as diverse as the following:

(a) Debt crisis and structural adjustment in Latin America and Africa in the 1980s;

(b) Political and economic collapse in the "transition economies" in Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States in the 1990s;

(c) Economic recession following fiscal instability and the exchange rate crisis in Mexico (1994-1995) and in East Asia (1997-1999);

(d) Increased structural unemployment and diminishing size of the welfare state in OECD countries from the mid-1980s to the present.

In most of the countries that were involved in these episodes, with very few exceptions, the general policy response has involved a movement towards greater economic liberalization and closer integration within the world economy. As a general tendency, market-driven activity has intensified and labour markets have become more flexible. Much of new employment creation has involved irregular, often precarious forms of work. Informal activities, subcontracting, part-time work, self-employment and home-based work proliferated, while the rate of unionization has declined. Standard labour legislation has all applied to fewer workers, either because Governments have not enforced or abolished regulations or because enterprises have been able to bypass or circumvent them.

B. Economic role of gender in the context of globalization

56. The simplest but yet most compelling argument in favour of globalization is the idea that it enables resources to be used where they are most productive. However, there is also a caveat. National economies must be capable of continually adjusting themselves to the changing conditions of the world economy before they can reap the economic benefits associated with globalization. On the one hand, countries have to facilitate the increased flow of labour and resources across sectors, and, on the other, they must cope with the adjustment costs this creates. Both are inherently "gendered" processes.

57. The effects on the relative welfare of women, though important in their own right, are only some of the reasons why the gender dimension of these processes matters Equally important is the impact gender has on a country's capacity for economic development, especially in the present context of globalization. This can be expounded at three levels, in the context of (a) productivity enhancing effects of re-allocation of labour; (b) how costs of economic adjustment are dealt with; and (c) investment in human resources that promote economic growth.

1. Reallocation of labour

58. As is discussed in chapter II, the economic forces associated with globalization have had strongly gendered employment effects. With a few exceptions, the female share of employment has steadily increased during the last two decades around the world. Much of this increase has resulted from a movement of female labour from the unpaid household and

subsistence (agriculture) sector to the paid economy.[11] Accompanying this trend have been the overall shifts in the structure of output and employment from manufacturing to services in developed countries, and from agriculture to manufacturing and services in developing countries.

59. From the vantage point of economic development, these trends have significant growth-enhancing effects, as they imply the transfer of labour from low- to high-productivity uses. That is so, despite the fact that women still face important gender inequalities in labour markets around the world. Indeed, large differences continue to persist with respect to quality, conditions and pay of female and male work. In many regions, even the physical mobility of women is restricted by social norms and conventions, which though rarely sanctioned by law go unchallenged by corrective social legislation. However, the increased incorporation of women in paid employment might also indicate a weakening of at least some of these barriers. For instance, even though the level of occupational segregation by sex, a rough indicator of the sum total of these barriers, remains high throughout (see chap. II.C.4), it has been falling in many regions of the world.

60. As mentioned above and will be discussed in detail in chapter III, throughout the world regular, full-time wage employment has given way to a more diverse pattern, characterized by the flexibilization and casualization of employment through outworking, contract labour, part-time labour, homework and other forms of labour that are unprotected by standard labour legislation. In fact, in recent years, much of the growth in employment has involved one or another of these *irregular* forms of work in both developed and developing countries. The rise of these jobs has been a part of the business response to the changing market conditions under globalization, involving efforts to cut costs on the one hand, and to make production responsive to increased volatility in demand on the other.

61. During this process, women appear to have been the preferred labour supply. In some regions, changes in the structure of output has meant, given the persistence of occupational segregation by sex, shifts in the gender composition of demand for labour. This has been especially evident in the pronounced shift towards the service sector in national output in most developed countries (chap. III.A.1). But, more importantly, women workers seem to have been in increased demand worldwide because they can be hired for lower pay and under less than desirable working conditions in comparison with men. Even though some women have been able to break into better jobs that were previously male dominated, the majority of women are still in low-paying *irregular* jobs with little training or promotion prospects. In most countries, even though female labour is still easily available when needed and dispensable when it is not, flexibilization of labour appears to have been responsible for expanding the ranks of women in paid employment.

62. The term "feminization of labour" has been used to underscore the gender dimension of changing employment patterns around the world (Standing, 1989 and 1998). Though used somewhat loosely at times, the term has two specific connotations. First, it refers to the rapid and substantial increase in the share of women in paid employment. That could have resulted either from women taking over jobs that were traditionally held by men, or from faster growth in sectors where the labour force is predominantly female. The evidence, discussed below, suggests that there has been some mixture of both in almost all regions of the world since the early 1980s. Second, the term is also used to describe the changing nature of employment, where irregular conditions that were once thought to be a hallmark of women's "secondary" employment[12] have become widespread for both sexes.

[11] A second important factor has been the stagnation in the male participation rate in employment.

[12] Secondary in relation to the so-called primary employment of the male breadwinner of the family.

2. Adjustment costs

63. Economic restructuring aimed at promoting flexible production, cost competitiveness and adaptability to changing market conditions in the world economy involves significant adjustment costs. The turnover rate of labour and thus the number of workers in transition increases; and many workers whose skills become obsolete become permanently unemployed unless retrained. Because of market uncertainty and increased pressure on costs, firms try to reduce their core workforce, and rely increasingly on irregular forms of employment in order not to have to support workers during economic downturns. Thus, the trend toward flexibilization of employment shifts many of the costs of market volatility to workers, making them more vulnerable to recessions and threatening their job and income security. The recent crisis in East Asia has painfully revealed these proclivities in economies that were until recently held up as examples of economic success under conditions of increased integration with world markets.

64. Just as they had increased the need for social protection, the conditions created by globalization have also transformed the environment for public policy. As discussed in chapter V, it has become more difficult for the state to cushion workers against the adverse effects of economic dislocations resulting from exposure to global market forces. In addition to the disciplinary effect of world markets on public expenditures, the State's ability to raise tax revenue seems to have diminished as well. In many countries, these trends appear to have inhibited the use of growth-stimulating macroeconomic policies as a way to improve the job prospects and wages of workers. Moreover, Governments have also been forced to curtail social spending on housing, nutrition, health, and education, either in absolute terms or on a per capita basis.

65. Women are on average affected by such trends more acutely than men, for a number of reasons. First, although their participation in paid work has increased in relation to men, women have often lacked employment security. Thus, being less likely to be covered by labour regulations and collective bargaining, women are often more vulnerable than men to economic downturns. Moreover, even when covered under formal schemes of social security, they seem to be at a disadvantage compared to men (see chap.V.A.2). Second, in most regions of the world, women's primary responsibility for household labour and childcare has shown little sign of diminishing with their increased participation in paid work (see chap.II.C). Third, because the family is the welfare provider of last resort, especially in developing countries, the demands placed on women's unpaid labour within the household increase during times of economic distress (see chap. V.B). Besides increasing women's burden of work, this is also injurious to women because it tends to strengthen the "homemaker" stereotype. An unequal burden of domestic work at home and a marginal position in the labour market might tend to reinforce each other, making it harder for women to break out of the role of dependent and secondary breadwinner within the family.

3. Human capabilities

66. How an economy copes with its adjustment costs also determines how those costs are distributed among different groups within a society. Though primarily a question of social equity and welfare, this also has implications for a society's capacity to generate human resources — the single most important factor in long-term economic growth, in the recent academic literature on the "new" growth theory.

67. Adjustment costs give rise to economic hardship, which in turn causes deprivation. The human damage caused by economic deprivation, in terms of one's capabilities and future prospects in life, is greatest for those who are least prepared to withstand it. Thus, shifting adjustment costs onto society's most vulnerable, who can least resist, is usually not the most

effective way in which they can be dealt with. For instance, it might be a private misfortune when economic deprivation interrupts schooling of one youngster, but when a significant portion of a whole cohort of children's education is adversely affected in a country, the result is a major *disinvestment* in human capabilities. These costs can be invisible and thus difficult to identify, especially in the short run, but that does not make their effects any less serious. Just as *investment* enhances the growth potential of an economy, *disinvestment* lowers it.

68. A few broad considerations follow. First, preventing economic deprivation from harming displaced workers' long-term ability to be productive is not only a social welfare issue but one that is intimately linked with economic development. Forced overwork or prolonged idleness due to permanent unemployment claim a severe toll on human mental and physical capabilities. Thus, unless adequately dealt with, the adjustment costs associated with economic restructuring can snowball to dwarf the benefits that are expected from increased integration with world markets. An inequitable social distribution of adjustment costs might just as well be one that is also economically suboptimal.

69. Second, as social processes increasingly enter the economic calculus, gender becomes an integral part of economics rather than a side issue in relation simply to women's issues. Women the world over are socialized to bear primary responsibility for all social activities that involve caring for others. Because such activities generally lack an economic end and are usually not mediated by market relations, until recently they were thought to be out of the bounds of economic analysis. However, as the present *Survey* tries to elucidate, the way a market economy functions involves a complex set of interactions with non-market activities. Who bears the cost of raising children, how the labour force is reproduced and maintained, and how the society keeps afloat its members who are left behind by rapid economic change and misfortune, are all related to *gendered* unpaid (non-market) activities, which in turn play a crucial role in how the *paid* (market) economy works. Thus, even though markets are not intrinsically gendered themselves, they bear and transmit gender inequalities embedded in the household and society at large.[13]

C. Organization of chapters

70. Chapter I sets the stage for discussion of the gender effects of globalization in later chapters. The three economic trends are described that are commonly associated with the economic dimension of globalization: (a) trade liberalization and expansion; (b) the spread of production capacity around the world through foreign direct investment by multinational corporations; and (c) financial liberalization and the increased international mobility of financial capital.

71. In chapters II through V, the gender impact of the trends summarized in chapter I are discussed under three headings:

(a) Employment and displacement effects of globalization (chap. II);

(b) Internationalization of production, reorganization of work and flexibilization of labour (chaps. IV and V);

(c) Transformation of the public policy environment (chap. V).

[13] The economic analysis of gender relations is quite recent. Economists have, in isolated instances, debated "women's issues" as early as the 1930s and the 1950s. However, the concept of gender relations as a socially constructed category that could have systemic links to the economy began to emerge only from early in the 1970s. See Beneria (1995) for a detailed exposition.

72. Focusing on developing countries, chapter II gives a detailed overview of employment and displacement effects of economic trends associated with globalization from a gender point of view. The second part of chapter II discusses the importance of these effects in terms of their influence on women's relative position within the household and the labour markets around the world.

73. Chapter III begins with a discussion of how the reorganization of production has led to the changing structure of output and flexibilization of employment worldwide. It then focuses individually on each of the main forms of flexible labour — part-time, informal sector and home-based work — that have proliferated in the last two decades. The chapter ends with an overview of the changing patterns of international labour mobility and the emergence of migrant labour as yet another source of flexible labour.

74. In assessing how the gender effects of market liberalization have transformed rural women's work, chapter IV focuses on the gender division of labour in production and the implications of privatization on women's property and user rights on land, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. The chapter ends with an overview of how rural women have been responding to the changing economic environment brought about by market liberalization.

75. Chapter V explains why globalization has tended to increase the demand for social protection, while at the same time inhibiting the capacity of the state to provide it, with gender-asymmetric effects. Finally, chapter VI summarizes the recent labour market trends discussed in the *Survey* and evaluates their likely impact on gender relations. The chapter ends with some suggestions for a gender-aware policy agenda at both the national and international levels.

I. Globalization of trade, capital and finance

76. Globalization may be defined as the increase in movement across national borders of some combination of goods and services, and factors of production including capital, labour, and financial capital. Over the past 100 years, in different periods, one or more of those four categories has dominated the trend towards global economic integration.

77. By the measure of goods and services, the world economy was possibly more integrated in the late nineteenth century than it is today. By 1890, trade volumes as a percentage of national income were roughly 5 per cent for the United States, 12 per cent for Japan, and 17 per cent for Europe. In the United States and Europe, trade volumes peaked before the First World War and then collapsed during the inter-war years. Trade subsequently surged after 1950, though none of the three regions is significantly more open by this measure now than late in the 1800s. In fact, the share of exports in Japanese output is lower now than before the Second World War.

78. Late in the nineteenth century, large flows of labour migrated across borders. In the United States, in particular, millions of European immigrants swelled the labour force by 24 per cent during the 40 years prior to the First World War (Williamson, 1996).

79. During the inter-war years, reduced flows of trade and immigrants reflected a decline in economic transactions across national boundaries. A major shift in the nature of global economic engagement took place after the Second World War. Trade flows rose beginning in the 1950s. A distinguishing feature of the post-war era has been the surge of foreign direct investment (FDI) in the 1970s. That decade marked the rise of multinational corporations (MNCs) that produce abroad, as compared with firms of the earlier period which merely

sold abroad. This shift was facilitated by the relaxation of capital controls and the gradual reduction in restrictions on operations of foreign firms in developing economies. It gained further momentum with new technologies that lowered costs of transportation and communications.

80. The current period, from the 1980s, differs in quality from the earlier period by the mobility of both physical and financial capital. Just as nineteenth century technological advances facilitated trade by improving the means and reducing the costs of physical transportation, by analogy, the contemporary power of computers and of information transfer and telecommunications systems have permitted the almost instantaneous transfer and manipulation of data and financial instructions over great distances (Castells, 1993; Hamelink, 1997). This, combined with the liberalization of controls on the participation of non-nationals in national financial markets, has enabled international flows of private capital to multiply in a dramatic fashion. For example, early in the 1980s, official flows accounted for the bulk of international capital flows, mostly in the form of official aid grants and bank loans to Governments. Currently, they amount to less than the private flows, and have fallen in value in absolute as well as relative terms since the mid-1980s.

81. In contrast, private capital flows increased exponentially in the 1990s.[14] Along with new information technologies, they have been one of the driving forces behind the international reorganization of production and the transformation of employment around the world. While FDI flows have transplanted production capacity to far-flung corners of the world, financial investment has facilitated this global reorganization of productive activity.

82. Another unique feature of the current period is the restricted nature of labour mobility, especially in comparison with the turn of the century. In spite of visible flows of migrants across the borders and the rising ratio of women to men in the migrant stock, the workforce worldwide remains by and large bound within national borders.[15] Immigration is more prevalent among a small transnational class of professionals and workers in select countries, such as those in the European Union or Gulf States.

83. The rest of the present chapter describes recent trends (up to the outbreak of the financial turmoil in world markets in 1997) related to: (a) the expansion of international trade, (b) mobility of foreign direct investment and the spread of production capacity around the world, and, finally, (c) financial liberalization and mobility of financial capital. The East Asian crisis and its gender effects are discussed in chapter V.

A. Trade liberalization and expansion after the Second World War

84. International trade flows, measured as the share of exports in GDP, provide an indication of globalization trends. Since the Second World War, the proportion of total world output that is traded has grown more or less steadily. Between 1950 and 1996, the volume of world exports increased 16 times, while total world output increased only 6 times. The fastest growing product category in this increase has been manufactured goods. Again, within this category as well, exports increased faster than the level of production:

[14] Private capital flows come in a great range of maturities. The longest-term component is FDI, while portfolio (or financial) investment involving holdings of financial assets and short-term bank loans are the most short term.

[15] The last section of chap. III discusses changing patterns of international labour mobility.

respectively 31 times and 9 times in the same time span. Currently, close to 15 per cent of world output is exported, compared to 7 per cent in 1950.[16]

85. Figure I.1 shows the relative growth rates of output and exports for total production and manufactures since 1950.[17] The mirror image of the growth in exports is the level of imports made possible by export earnings. Consequent to increases in export revenues, expenditures on imported goods and services have also risen in almost all countries (UNCTAD, 1994a).

86. Developing countries have more or less maintained their overall position in the world market. Their share of world exports by value has remained fairly steady, at 22.6 per cent in 1992 compared to 23.4 per cent in 1975.

87. Developing country performance has been highly successful in some product categories but weak in others. The greatest success has been in manufactures. Table I.1 shows that developing countries have significantly increased their share of world exports of manufactures, from 6.3 per cent of the total in 1975 to 18.2 per cent in 1992. Electronics components and garments have been the two single most important and fastest growing products in developing country manufactured exports. They accounted for 10 per cent and 6 per cent, respectively, of total developing countries exports in 1990-1991.

88. But as table I.1 shows, the overall picture conceals a wide divergence of export performance in terms of both product categories and regional and country groupings. A select few developing countries account for most of the success in export markets, especially in manufactures. This group of countries, mostly East Asian, has experienced such strong export earnings and sustained such high economic growth rates that they have mostly graduated into the middle- or upper-income country group. By contrast, primary goods exporters in developing countries have had dire experiences in world commodity markets. The purchasing power of their exports has fallen, and as table I.1 shows, their share of primary products exports in the world total fell from 48.6 to 37.3 per cent. Reflecting mainly the weakened trade performance in sub-Saharan Africa, the least developed countries' share of world exports fell by more than half, from 0.7 to 0.3 per cent between 1975 and 1992 (UNCTAD, 1995). In the same period, the share of primary goods in total exports for African countries as a whole fell only moderately from 94.7 to 83.7 per cent.

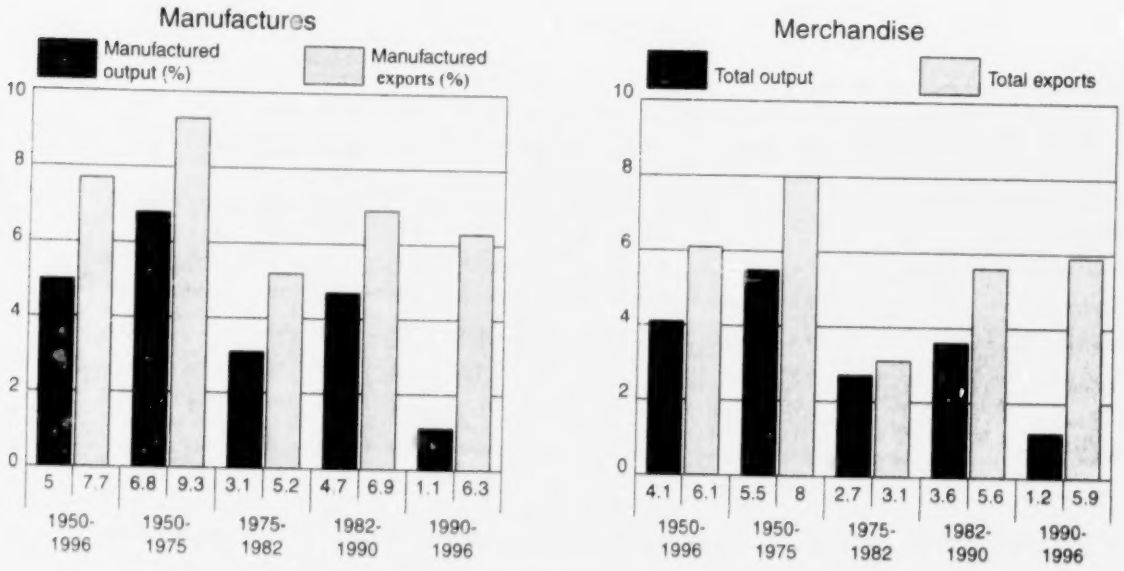
B. Mobility of physical capital and foreign direct investment

89. Another important indicator of the trend of globalization is the expansion of organization, production and marketing operations of business enterprises across national borders through FDI. In expanding the volume of FDI, MNCs, which are by definition businesses that operate transnationally, have been assisted by two factors: (a) innovations in transportation and communication, and (b) relaxation of rules and restrictions on the movement of physical and financial capital. By 1990, 16 per cent of total world output was produced by firms operating in countries other than their own. This is a 40 per cent increase over 1977 (Lipsey, 1998). The manufacturing sector has been the largest single component in international production.

[16] *Financial Times*, 18 May 1998.

[17] Because of inadequacies in the existing data, the rapid growth of trade in services (including transport and tourism, but especially trade in financial services) is not revealed in the figure. Trade in services accounts for about 20 per cent of total trade (approximately the same share as commodity trade) and is now the fastest-growing component of world trade (UNCTAD, 1994).

Figure I.1
Growth rates of world output and exports of commodities, 1950-1996
(Per cent a year-fitted log linear trend)



Source: *Financial Times*, 18 May 1998.

Table I.1
Structure of world exports, by main product categories

Trade structure	Share by region (percentage)							Share by product categories[c] (percentages)			
	Total			Primary		Manufactures[b]		Primary[a]		Manufactures[b]	
Country	1975	1992	1995[d]	1975	1992	1975	1992	1975	1992	1975	1992
World	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Developed market-economy countries	55.8	72.4		42.0	55.4	84.4	77.7	25.4	18.6	73.0	78.8
Countries in Eastern Europe	9.0	2.6		8.2	5.1	8.8	1.6	37.1	48.5	56.5	45.7
Socialist Asia	0.8	2.4		1.2	2.1	0.6	2.5	57.7	21.5	41.0	78.0
Developing countries	23.4	22.5	27.7	48.6	37.3	6.3	18.2	84.2	39.9	15.5	59.0
• America	5.5	3.7	4.4	11.8	9.6	1.3	1.8	86.3	53.3	13.3	35.8
• Africa	3.9	1.9	1.5	9.1	6.6	0.3	0.4	94.7	83.7	5.1	15.8
• West Asia	8.6	3.2	21.4	20.5	10.5	0.5	0.8	96.6	8.5	3.4	80.5
• Other Asia	5.2	13.4		6.9	10.1	4.1	14.7	53.8	18.2	45.5	80.5
Least developed countries	0.7	0.3		1.5	0.8	0.1	0.1	89.7	69.1	9.8	29.5

Source: UNCTAD secretariat, based on data from the United Nations Statistics Division.

[a] SITC 0 to 4 plus 68.

[b] SITC 5 to 8 less 68.

[c] The percentages shown do not add up to 100, due to exclusion of unallocated exports (SITC 9).

[d] UNCTAD (1998a).

90. Though FDI has a long history, its importance for developing countries has risen since the 1980s. During 1985 to 1992, the ratio of FDI flows to gross fixed capital formation in developing countries increased from 2 to 7 per cent (UNCTAD, 1996). It is currently more than twice the value of portfolio investment, providing in aggregate 40 per cent of the total external finance available to developing countries (FIAS, 1998b).

91. As an indicator of the comparative growth of the mobility of real capital, from 1983 to 1989, FDI expanded 30 per cent worldwide, compared to 10 per cent for exports. Some 80 per cent of the flows during this period took place among the developed economies (Zysman, 1996). Nevertheless, given the much smaller size of developing economies, inflows of FDI have had a proportionately greater impact on their economies. Moreover, net FDI flows to developing economies have grown dramatically since early in the 1980s. The scale of FDI operations worldwide and their rapid growth in the 1990s are illustrated in table I.2.

Table I.2
Scale and growth rate of FDI operations: stock of FDI as share of GDP
(Percentage)

Region/economy	*1980*	*1985*	*1990*	*1995*	*1996*
Developed countries					
Inward	3.8	4.9	6.6	9.1	7.6
Outward	5.2	5.9	7.8	11.5	10.1
Total FDI	**9.0**	**10.8**	**14.4**	**20.6**	**17.7**
Developing countries or areas					
Inward	4.3	8.2	8.5	15.4	15.6
Outward	0.6	1.2	1.8	4.5	4.9
Total FDI	**4.9**	**9.4**	**10.3**	**19.9**	**20.5**
Sub-Saharan Africa					
Inward	4.0	7.8	13.5	16.8	21.8
Outward	0.1	3.3	6.6	7.2	8.2
Total FDI	**4.1**	**11.1**	**20.1**	**24.0**	**30.0**
Angola	1.7	11.1	13.2	33.6	59.8
Botswana	15.5	35.1	21.7	16.5	32.8
Ghana	1.5	4.3	5.1	15.8	15.3
Kenya	4.8	7.1	7.3	7.7	7.7
Mauritius	1.8	3.5	6.4	6.3	6.6
Nigeria	2.6	5.5	24.9	22.7	39.9
Zimbabwe	-	0.5	0.9	1.1	7.7
South America					
Inward	5.8	8.9	8.6	14.3	13.8
Outward	0.2	0.5	0.6	1.2	1.2
Total FDI	**6.0**	**9.4**	**9.2**	**15.5**	**15.0**
Brazil	6.9	11.3	8.5	17.8	14.2
Chile	3	14.1	33.1	23.1	27.3
Caribbean and Central America					
Inward	7.7	14.5	18.4	33.1	29.7
Outward	0.8	2.1	2.5	3.3	2.5
Total FDI	**8.5**	**16.6**	**20.9**	**36.4**	**32.2**
Costa Rica	13.9	24.4	25.3	30.2	35.5
Dominican Republic	3.6	5.2	8.1	11.8	17.3
Haiti	5.7	5.6	5.6	5.7	5.0
Jamaica	18.7	22.7	16.2	31.3	35.4
Mexico	4.2	10.2	13.2	25.6	22.3
South, East and South-East Asia					
Inward	3.8	6.6	8.8	15.1	15.8

Region economy	*1980*	*1985*	*1990*	*1995*	*1996*
Outward	1.3	1.4	2.7	7.0	8.1
Total FDI	**5.1**	**8.0**	**11.5**	**22.1**	**23.9**
Bangladesh	0.4	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.7
Hong Kong SAR[a]	6.3	10.5	17.9	22.7	15.7
India	0.7	0.5	0.5	1.9	2.6
Republic of Korea	1.8	1.9	2.3	2.3	2.6
Singapore	52.9	73.6	76.3	67.4	72.4
Taiwan Province of China	5.8	4.7	6.1	7.3	7.3
Viet Nam	-	0.2	3.3	31.9	40.2
Central and Eastern Europe					
Inward	-	-	0.1	4.9	5.9
Outward	-	-	-	0.3	0.4
Total FDI	**-**	**-**	**0.1**	**5.2**	**6.3**
Hungary	-	-	2.0	31.5	33.2
Least developed countries					
Inward	1.8	3.4	3.9	5.2	6.1
Outward	0.1	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3
Total FDI	**1.9**	**3.8**	**4.3**	**5.6**	**6.4**

Source: UNCTAD, 1998b; for 1995 figures, UNCTAD, 1997b.

[a] Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China.

92. The table presents data on the cumulative stock of FDI as a proportion of the size of the relevant economy (indicated by GDP) for the period 1980-1996. The "inward" stock line item refers to the cumulative value of all inward investment flows into, and thus the value of the total capital stock owned by foreign businesses in, that country. The "outward" stock line item refers to investments made abroad by nationals of that country or region. The data are presented in aggregate for the developed countries, the developing countries in total, and for the low-income sub-group of least developed countries. Selected country data are also given for some developing regions.[18]

93. The data in table I.2 show that physical capital mobility has substantially increased over the 16-year period, 1980-1996, indicating that MNCs now have greater options in deciding where to locate their production facilities. Restrictions on labour mobility, by contrast, have hardly diminished, if not increased, during the same period. This asymmetry in mobility has had an important impact on the respective bargaining powers of businesses and workers in relation to both each other and Government.[19]

[18] Table I.2 also gives data on total FDI, defined as the sum of inward and outward FDI as a share of GDP, which gives a measure of the mobility of real capital. This indicator is important because it suggests the ability of firms to relocate to other countries in response to domestic cost changes or other local conditions that affect profitability.

[19] The broader gender implications of this realignment of bargaining power in labour markets is discussed in chap. V.

94. As the table reveals in part, the following features stand out in relation to FDI flows:

(a) In aggregate, developed countries are net exporters of FDI, while the developing countries are net importers. However, the magnitude of FDI within the developed world is substantial and some developed countries are net recipients of FDI on a large scale (e.g. the Netherlands and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland). But overall as a group, they are net suppliers of capital;

(b) As the marked increase between 1990 and 1997 indicates (see fig. I.2), the rate of current FDI flows increased rapidly in the course of that period. Total FDI increased more in developing countries than developed economies over the period 1980-1997. While the share of total FDI in GDP roughly doubled in developed economies during that period, such regions as Asia, the Caribbean and Central America saw nearly a sixfold increase;

(c) There is great variation among individual countries in the extent of FDI flows they receive. Regional and income-level averages disguise a wide dispersion. For instance, in sub-Saharan Africa most FDI flows are related to minerals projects in a small number of countries (namely, Angola, Botswana, Ghana and Nigeria). With the exception of South Africa and a few countries or areas, such as Kenya, the rest receive negligible FDI flows, if any. Likewise, in Asia, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China and Singapore have very high FDI levels, while a diverse group of other countries or areas, such as Bangladesh, India and the Republic of Korea, have very low levels. Hungary and Viet Nam stand out markedly as major recipients, both among the transition economies and in their respective regions;

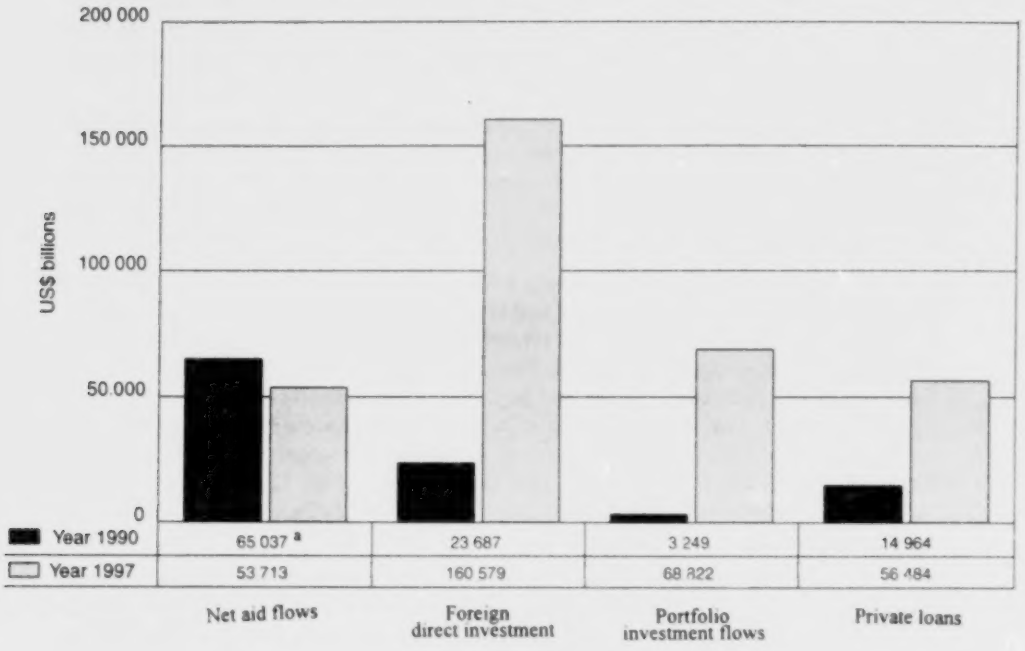
(d) FDI flows to developing countries usually give rise to "bandwagon" effects. Capital flows are predominantly to favoured destinations, bypassing completely a large number of countries. In 1997, 10 countries attracted about 75 per cent of all FDI to developing countries. Among current favourites, China is by far the largest recipient of inflows, in absolute amount and even in relation to national income (ODI, 1997).[20] At the other extreme are the resource-poor and the lowest-income countries which receive the lowest amount of FDI, both in absolute terms and relative to their GDP;

(e) Most (60-70 per cent) of all FDI has traditionally been in labour-intensive industries (textiles and clothing, engineering and electronics) whose labour force is predominantly female. But there has been some shift, especially in some Asian countries, towards higher-skill, more capital-intensive operations (FIAS, 1998a; Kasugo and Tzannatos, 1998; Parisotto, 1993).

95. FDI is often but not always the catalytic factor for financial capital flows. The committal of FDI by a foreign investor can lead to bank loans to support further investment and trade-related credits for financing exports (UNCTAD, 1996). Because FDI by its very nature implies a long-term commitment, its presence can promote stability and inspire the confidence of potential investors in that economy.

[20] FDI into China amounted to 6.5 per cent of GDP in 1994 and 1995. Perhaps as much as 50 per cent of total FDI to China originates in Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR). Much of that investment is not truly foreign, but comes from China and returns through Hong Kong SAR in order to take advantage of special provisions granted to FDI. See UNCTAD, 1997, p. 51.

Figure I.2
Net resource flows to developing countries by type, 1990 and 1997



Source: World Bank, 1999b.

[a] 1992.

C. Financial liberalization and portfolio investment

96. One of the most important ways in which current trends towards globalization differ from earlier trends is the rapid growth of financial flows. The recent liberalization of controls on the participation of non-nationals in local financial markets has been an important factor in expansion of international financial flows. In 1983, there had been virtually no net portfolio investment in developing countries, but by 1993 the amount had risen to $50 billion a year and by 1995 to $150 billion. Gross flows to developing countries and other regions have grown even more dramatically, rising by 1,200 per cent from the mid-1980s to 1994 (Eichengreen and Mussa, 1998).

97. In the past, international financial transactions almost always used to be tied to trade flows in the form of trade credits, bills of insurance, and remittances. But this is no longer so. Debts, securities, bonds, currencies, futures contracts and other forms of derivative financial instruments are all internationally traded now, and, to a huge extent, quite independently of trade in goods. Some forms of financial transactions, notably foreign investment, now create others, such as profit remittances and further investment loans, in a self-fuelling spiral of financial transactions (UNCTAD, 1996 and 1997). Moreover, an increasing portion of short-term flows are motivated by the goal of generating speculative earnings in currency and financial markets, earning it the label "hot money" (Griffith-Jones and Stallings, 1995).

98. Since the mid-1980s, the growth of international financial transactions has been especially rapid. Three major trends have emerged:

(a) Until early in the 1980s, official flows accounted for the bulk of international capital flows, mostly in the form of official aid grants and bank loans to Governments. The debt crisis in the early part of that decade almost entirely concerned sovereign debt, that is, borrowing by Governments. But official flows are now of smaller value than private flows. Africa is the only region where official financial inflows are still larger than private flows. But the amounts are declining in real terms, down by one quarter in 1997 compared with the 1990 figure;[21]

(b) Just like FDI, financial flows have also been highly concentrated and uneven, with a tendency for finance to build on the "best". Over three quarters of portfolio investment has gone to only 10 countries, often called the "emerging markets";

(c) While FDI remains the largest source of private financial flows, short-term flows have grown at a faster pace. Between 1990 and 1995, the movement of portfolio equity flows in the "South" surged from $3.2 billion to $45.7 billion as a number of developing economies opened their stock markets and liberalized their financial systems.

99. As discussed in chapter V, short-term portfolio investment can be highly volatile. As the recent East Asian crisis has dramatically demonstrated, the potential for "herd" behaviour inherent in financial markets can lead to sharp changes in market sentiment, provoking sudden and abrupt reversals in the direction of private capital flows.[22]

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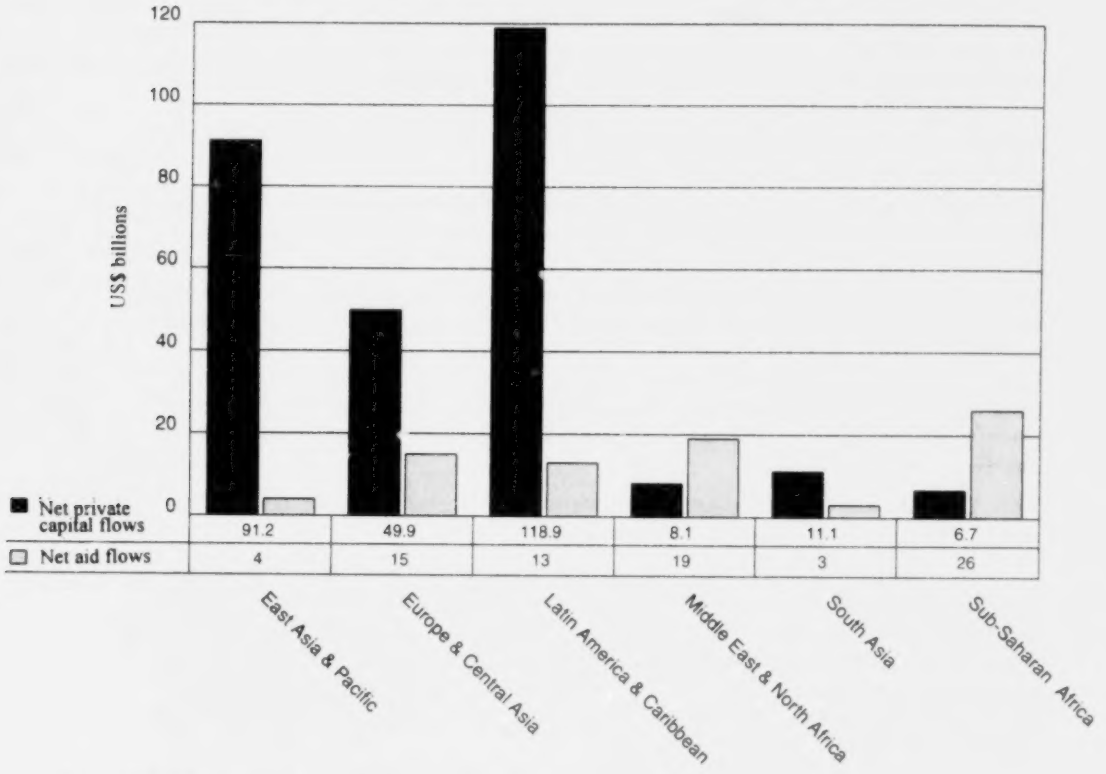
[21] *Financial Times*, 15/16 August 1998.

[22] In 1997, the net outflow of private funds from the Asian region as a whole approximated $20 billion, compared to the net inflows of approximately $70 billion in 1995 and $80 billion in 1996 (Development Research Insights, 1998).

Figure I.3
Regional distribution of long-term net resource flows, 1997



Source: World Bank, 1999a.

100. In the following chapters, the gender effects of these three processes (trade expansion, FDI flows, and financial liberalization) associated with globalization are discussed in terms of (a) employment and displacement effects (chap. II); (b) reorganization of production and transformation of work (chaps. III and IV); (c) transformation of the public policy environment (chap. V).

II. Employment and deplacement effects of globalization

101. As figure II.1 shows, increased participation of women in paid work is a global reality.[23] Not only has it risen in almost all regions of the world but it has also spearheaded the overall employment growth in recent years. In fact, with the sole exception of Africa, women's employment has grown substantially faster than men's since 1980 (ILO, 1998). With a stagnating (or slightly decreasing) male labour force participation rate, the differences between male and female labour force participation rates have shrunk considerably in many regions.

102. Among OECD countries, women's inroads into the workforce have been most noticeable in such countries as the Netherlands and Spain, where women had been less active in the labour force at the beginning of the 1980s. In Canada, the United States of America, and the Scandinavian countries, women now make up nearly half of the active population, with activity rates of over 70 per cent in the core age groups. In developing countries, women's labour force participation rate has also been rising and currently well exceeds 60 per cent. In most of the Middle East countries, the female participation rates in economic activity remain low.[24] However, women who are economically active in the rural and urban informal sectors are usually undercounted in developing countries. Nonetheless, the general trend seems unmistakable: women's participation in paid employment has been rising steadily in developing countries as well. The impact of economic forces unleashed by globalization and changing labour market dynamics is thought to have played a crucial role in this upward trend. No doubt, there have also been other important factors. Among these are secular improvements in women's level of educational attainment, falling fertility rates, better access to health care, as well as changing lifestyles and attitudes. However, the link between general improvements in a country's social development indicators, which are strongly correlated with most of the above-mentioned factors, and female labour force participation rates is not a straightforward one.[25] Given the complexities, the focus here is rather narrow. It is restricted to employment effects that can directly be tied to (a) trade expansion and FDI flows on the one hand, and (b) changing structure of output and reorganization of production on the other.[26] The first of those is the subject matter of the present chapter, while the second is that of the next. Developing countries figure more

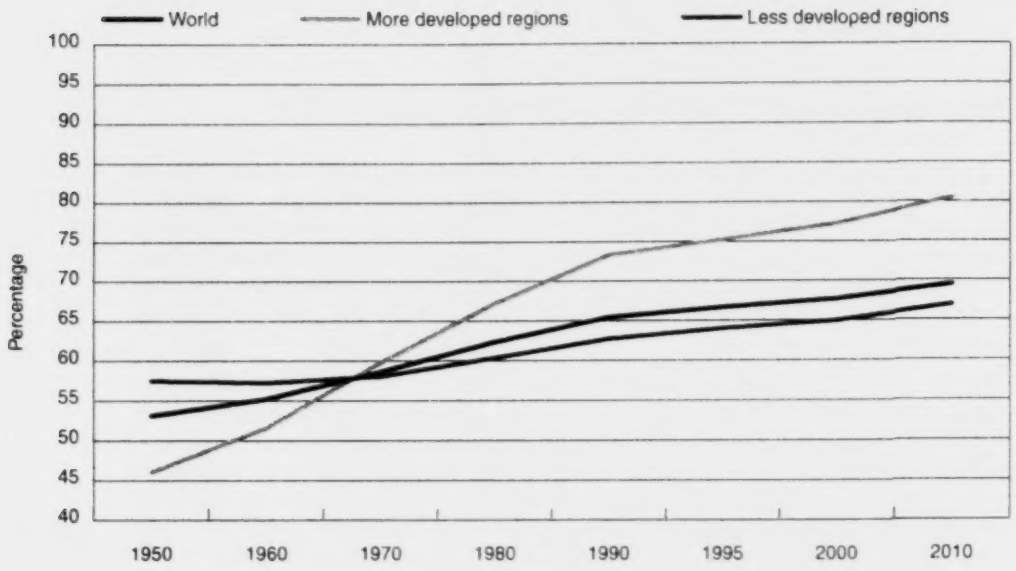
[23] The overall economic activity rate of women, for the age group 20-54, is now approaching 70 per cent, having climbed from slightly above 50 per cent in 1950 (ILO, 1996a).

[24] The lowest levels of female participation in the labour force are recorded in the Arab countries of the Middle East. However, in the last few decades, women's share of employment has been increasing in this group of countries as well, from 22 per cent in 1970 to 27 per cent in 1995. The share of economically active women is highest in Egypt and Lebanon, while lowest in the Gulf countries.

[25] There is some evidence that economic development first reduces, then opens up, paid employment for women, in a U-shaped relationship between economic development and non-agricultural, female labour force participation (Schultz 1990, UNIDO 1993, Cagatay and Ozler, 1995). See also Erturk and Cagatay, 1995, for a discussion of how these secular trends might interact with more short-term cyclical variables.

[26] The employment effects associated with financial liberalization are discussed separately in chapter V.

Figure II.1
Women's activity rates for the age group 20-54 years, 1950-2010



Source: ILO, 1996a, Bureau of Statistics estimates.

prominently than the developed in the former, while the reverse is the case in the latter. The chapter ends with an assessment of the effects of paid employment on women's position relative to men, both within the household and in the labour market, including a review of the recent evidence on changes in the gender wage gap and occupational segregation by sex.

A. Employment effects

1. Manufacturing sector

103. Among the newly industrializing countries, where manufacturing production has been heavily oriented towards exports, the share of women workers in such industries has increased substantially. Indeed, none of those countries has increased its exports of manufactures without recourse to women workers. It is by now considered a stylized fact that industrialization in the context of globalization is as much female-led as it is export-led (Standing, 1989, 1998; Joekes, 1982; Pearsons, 1992; Tomoda, 1995).

104. In some developing countries, the employment effects of export orientation has been a drastic turning point for women's engagement in the money economy. For instance, in 1978 Bangladesh had only four garment factories; by 1995, it had 2,400, employing 1.2 million workers. Ninety per cent of them were women under the age of 25 (Amin and others, 1998). The sector employed 70 per cent of the women in wage employment in the country (Bhattacharya, 1997). Though Bangladesh is perhaps an extreme case, many other countries or areas also have seen dramatic increases both in export manufacturing capacity and in the number and share of women in the manufacturing labour force: the Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Mauritius, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Taiwan Province of China and Tunisia are cases in point. In general, the stronger the concentration of exports on labour-intensive goods, such as clothing, semiconductors, toys, sporting goods and shoes, the higher tends to be the proportion of women workers (ILO/UNCTC, 1988). Moreover, for the same product categories within the export sector, the proportion of female workers seems even higher in foreign-owned firms (Foreign Intelligence Advisory Service, 1998a).

105. However, since late in the 1980s, in many middle-income countries or areas, the demand for women's labour in manufacturing has been weakening, as export production became more skill- and capital-intensive. This has been the case, for example, in Puerto Rico, Singapore and Taiwan Province of China (Acevedo, 1990; Berik, 1995; Joekes and Weston, 1994). In the Republic of Korea also, the composition of the workforce in the electronics industry has changed in favour of male workers, as production in this sector shifted to more sophisticated communication and computer products (Kim and Kim, 1995). Similarly, in the *maquilladoras* of Mexico, the proportion of female workers fell from 77 per cent in 1982 to under 60 per cent in 1990 (Shaiken, 1993). These trends suggest that female gains in manufacturing employment observed around the globe might not be long lived.

2. Foreign direct investment and export processing zones

106. The above-mentioned effects can be difficult to accurately assess (Ward and Pyle, 1995), because the increasing prevalence of subcontracting, often related directly to specific MNCs via local intermediaries, has weakened the distinction between foreign and local ownership. That said, some figures can be given to indicate the general orders of magnitude of the direct employment effects of MNCs. In developing countries, MNC employment has

been estimated at about 26 or 27 million (UNCTAD, 1994; FIAS, 1998a; ILO, 1998).[27] Between 1975 and 1986, it has grown rapidly by 9 per cent annually; and from 1986 to 1990, even more rapidly, by 14 per cent (FIAS, 1998a). Despite this steady increase, in most countries, direct FDI employment remains of negligible importance in total employment. Overall, it accounts for only about 2 per cent of total wage employment in developing countries (FIAS, 1998a). But in a few countries it is the main employer: in 1985, the proportion of those working in foreign affiliates among all wage employees was about 50 per cent in Ghana and Tunisia, and over 20 per cent in Argentina, Indonesia and Mexico (FIAS, 1998a).

107. The gender-differentiated employment effects of FDI have been extensively studied in relation to export processing zones (EPZs). In these special industrial zones, which were set up by developing countries to attract FDI and generate employment, export producers and MNCs were exempted from many administrative and fiscal requirements as well as statutory regulations protecting workers. Some countries have even promulgated special labour laws for EPZs, setting up more stringent obstacles against labour organization than is the case in the domestic economy[28] (Nam, 1994). Today, 93 developing countries have EPZs, compared to 24 in 1976 (FIAS, 1998a).[29]

108. The upper panel of table II.1 shows that women's employment has made up a greater proportion of total employment in EPZs than in manufacturing as a whole in five major exporting countries in Asia. However, the shift towards less labour-intensive activities in the manufacturing sector, noted above, has generally led to a sharper decline in the share of women in the EPZ labour forces in some countries (Joekes, 1995).

109. The overall trend of the share of women in export manufacturing in EPZs appears to reach a peak and then decline (ILO/UNCTC, 1988.) The decline is associated with (a) diversification of the export product mix towards higher value added, more technologically demanding product categories, and with (b) the increasing capital intensity of production technologies. It appears that as jobs and wages improve in quality, women tend to be excluded from them. Their situation may eventually come to resemble the previous pattern of male-dominated employment in domestically oriented industries prior to the 1980s, with strong gender stereotyping of jobs in high-technology, capital-intensive operations.

3. Service sector

110. The rapidly expanding international financial services sector also appears to employ a high proportion of female workers. This certainly appears to be the case with respect to the lower-skill applications, such as data entry, in this sector. Since at least the mid-1980s, corporations in data-reliant services, such as credit card providers, mail order businesses, airlines and rail systems, have sent transactions data to be processed offshore. The Caribbean (Barbados and Jamaica, which has an electronic information EPZ called the Digiport) and

[27] This total does not include indirectly created employment among subcontracted suppliers and individually contracted home-based workers.

[28] However, it would be incorrect to assume that women workers in EPZs refrain from organizing; see box II.1.

[29] The size and importance of EPZs in total production of manufactures for export varies from country to country. Of the large East Asian export economies, only Singapore has a large EPZ sector (consistent with its very high level of FDI). Latin America is home to 48 per cent and Asia (excluding China) to 42 per cent of EPZs. In China, the two million employees of EPZs are far exceeded by the numbers (between 14 and 40 million) in "special economic zones", which also give favourable treatment to exports but are far larger in scale and scope than EPZs and integrated with residential and infrastructural investments (FIAS, 1998a).

Table II.1
Female employment in export processing zones

A. Share of women in employment in EPZs and in non-EPZ manufacturing, selected Asian countries
(Percentage)

		All economy	*EPZ*	*Non-EPZ-manufacturing*
Malaysia	1980	33.4	75.0	35.6
	1990	35.5	53.5	47.2
Philippines	1980	37.1	74.0	N/A
	1994	36.5	73.9	45.2
Republic of Korea	1987	40.4	77.0	41.7
	1990	40.8	70.1	42.1
Sri Lanka	1981	36.0	86.3	29.8
	1992	46.4	84.8	46.0

Source: Kusago and Tzannatos, 1998.

B. Total employment and share of women in employment in EPZs, selected Central American and Caribbean countries
(Percentage)

Country	*Numbers of factories*	*Workers in textiles and clothing (percentage)*	*Total employment*	*Women in total (percentage)*
Costa Rica	250	70	50 000	65
Dominican Republic	469	65	165 571	60
El Salvador	208	69	50 000	78
Guatemala	481	80	165 945	80
Honduras	155	95	61 162	78
Nicaragua	18	89	7 553	80
Panama	6	100	1 200	95

Source: Daeren, 1997.

some Asian countries (China, India, Malaysia and the Philippines) are established centres for those kinds of businesses. The labour force in these businesses has at least as high a proportion of women workers as the export manufacturing sector in general, and is almost completely female in the case of the Caribbean.

111. Other customized, higher-skill business services, such as software design, computer programming and financial services (banking and insurance), are also increasingly being relocated to developing countries and employ relatively high proportions of women, even at higher grades (Mitter and Rowbotham, 1995; Pearson and Mitter, 1993; Joekes, 1995). However, there are not enough consolidated data on this type of employment in this sector to establish its worldwide importance or trends.

Box II.1
Unionization among women workers in export processing zones in Malaysia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka

Women employed in EPZs are predominantly young and single. Most come from rural areas and have little prior experience with wage employment. They often have little knowledge about unions and what unionization entails. However, despite such obstacles, there has been considerable union activity among female EPZ workers.

In Malaysia, for instance, there have been wildcat strikes and organizing of unions since 1971, when the first EPZs were established. After some successful attempts in organization in large textile factories in 1978, in-house unions were allowed for 85,000 electronics workers in 1988. By 1990, the Malaysian Trade Union Congress (MTUC) was active in most EPZs. Though not able to bargain collectively, it coordinated private-sector unions and provided legal advice and support for unorganized workers. Women's groups, which were active in MTUC since the early 1980s, provided women workers with legal help and classes in public speaking and leadership skills. Other community organizations, such as Teneganita Women's Workforce Action Group, also provide education on legal rights, various skills such as typing, sewing and public speaking.

In the Philippines, there are three EPZs. In Bataan EPZ alone, 41 trade unions had been formed by 1983, covering 89 per cent of all firms in the zone. A labour federation organized early in the 1980s had over 500,000 members by the end of the decade, and 30 per cent of its leaders were women.

In Sri Lanka by contrast, even though women had the right to organize, union activity has been limited in the two EPZs that exist. In these zones, various women's groups made contact with workers through community-based organizations in the 1980s, and several centres were set up to educate women workers.

Source: Kumudhini, 1994.

112. In many developing countries, in addition to export-oriented manufacturing, trade-related employment in the service sector (tourism, finance, and information processing) has also been rising. In Thailand, for example, by 1982 tourism had become the largest provider of foreign exchange, and by 1990 was generating 7 per cent of total export value (Bell, 1991). While accurate data are difficult to come by, a significant portion of receipts in the tourism sector are generated by the sex industry, which largely employs women (Lim, 1998).

4. Informal sector

113. For every job created by trade and FDI flows in the formal sector, a multiple number is also thought to be created within the informal sector. Cross-country data show that the share of female employment within this sector is typically higher than in formal sector activities, even in the most labour intensive sectors (Chen, and others, 1998). Even in

countries with a relatively developed modern sector, a very substantial proportion of female workers is in the informal sector. This figure, for instance, is 43 per cent in the Republic of Korea and 79 per cent in Indonesia (World Bank, 1995).

114. The size of this multiplier effect is probably quite significant, although no global estimate exists on the number of informal sector jobs which can be linked to formal sector employment creation by trade and FDI flows. As discussed in chapter III, jobs in the informal sector have been an increasingly important source of new employment growth, especially for women, in most developing countries in recent years. The vast relative size of the informal sector in total economic activity of developing countries has become much better appreciated (Mead, 1998; Charmes, 1998a).

5. Agriculture

115. Market liberalization and promotion of export crops in agriculture, which have generally accompanied trade liberalization in developing countries, have had ambiguous employment effects.[30] For instance, in Latin America, export crop expansion has in effect displaced women from permanent agricultural employment into seasonal employment (FAO, 1990). Women have lost their livelihood on subsistence plots, but could more easily find seasonal employment in low-paying jobs requiring intensive manual labour in the area of agricultural exports: harvesting coffee, cotton and tobacco in Brazil, the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua; cultivating strawberries in Mexico, peanuts in Brazil, fruit in Chile and flowers in Colombia (León, 1987). Again, in the Caribbean, the cultivation of non-traditional export crops has provided low-paying jobs for women but at the same time has undermined the production of food for the local market. This is likely to have disproportionately affected women, since they have traditionally been the producers and marketers of food for the local market (Antrobus, 1995).

116. Not all developments in the agricultural sector conform to this pattern, however. Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe have diversified their commodity exports to include non-traditional agricultural exports (NTAEs), from which earnings have risen very rapidly in recent years. Production and employment have often been organized in large-scale enterprises along quasi-industrial lines in the NTAE sector. Women usually comprise the great majority (about 90 per cent) of the workforce in this sector, not just in Kenya but also in other African countries, and are paid cash in direct exchange for their labour, in stark contrast with the situation on family farms. In the small-farm context, however, the revenue from NTAEs controlled by women is far less than what they contribute in labour input to production.

117. The NTAEs also rely on a predominantly female labour force in Latin American countries, especially Colombia and Mexico, where the sector is well established. In these countries, where wages in relation to profits remain quite low and occupational hazards can be severe, gender inequalities are also pronounced (Thrupp and others, 1995). In a recent study involving the introduction of some non-traditional crops in a number of poor communities in Guatemala, men were found to share the work with women but not the proceeds from sales, which they appropriated in a disproportionate manner (Carletto, 1998).

118. From another part of the world, in Thailand, comes yet another example of the new employment opportunities created by market liberalization in agriculture. Women have begun to subcontract to MNCs on family-owned plots, producing baby corn and asparagus on former paddy land. Earning cash income for the first time, these women had previously

[30] Chap. IV discusses the broader implications of commercialization and market liberalization in agriculture.

been unpaid for long hours of intensive labour in rice cultivation. Similarly, raising shrimp under contract to foreign companies, women in southern Thailand have been able to earn more in a shorter work day than what they could by cultivating rice. Many researchers, however, have questioned the sustainability of this type of work, drawing attention to its adverse environmental effects, health hazards and market fluctuations (Stephens, 1995).

B. Displacement effects

119. Given that women have been over-represented in light manufactures in developed economies, trade liberalization could be expected to have led to a decline in the female share of manufacturing employment as the exports of such goods from developing countries increased. However, the evidence to that effect is limited and at times contradictory. For instance, some research indicates negative employment effects on women in the textile industry of the United States, related to the growing trade deficit with China. But then, there is little systematic evidence showing an overall decline in women's share of manufacturing jobs in industrialized countries (Wood, 1994).[31] The lack of such evidence might be the result of: (a) the skill profile of women might be facilitating their reabsorption in newly created manufacturing jobs, more so than for men (Dean, 1991); or (b) in capital- and skill-intensive industries, where men predominate, the pace of job loss might have been as rapid because of trade and the quickened pace of productivity improvements (Howes and Singh, 1995).

120. Trade liberalization has also led to loss of employment in developing countries, often with gender-differentiated results. The increased competition from low-cost Asian producers has had the effect of displacing workers in labour-intensive industries in some developing countries, mainly in Africa (Biggs and Srivastava,1996). For instance, following trade liberalization, Zimbabwe experienced a decline in output and employment in textiles, wearing apparel and footwear industries in the mid-1990s. While firms in those sectors tend to be male dominated, both female and male workers were displaced (Carmody, 1997). In general, the gender balance among those displaced has depended on the job distribution between women and men prior to trade liberalization, and has varied from one country to another (Fontana and others, 1998). But overall, women's share of manufacturing jobs in Africa did not increase from 1980 to 1990 (Mehra and Gammage, 1999). Jobs were also lost because of trade liberalization in the handloom industry in Indonesia (Evers, 1994) and Sri Lanka (Jayaweera and others, 1989) in the 1980s.

121. If export expansion has a positive multiplier effect on women's employment in the informal sector, the opposite may also be true for import expansion. The direct effects from import expansion are negative. Local producers lose market share to cheaper imports and reduce the available jobs as a result. Imports displace women disproportionately in the informal sector because (a) women outnumber men as workers, and (b) as small entrepreneurs, they are more likely to be ill-equipped to upgrade their productive activities in the face of increased competition.

122. For example, some case studies from Kenya describe how women basket makers have experienced loss of employment and livelihood as consumers switched to imported, mass produced substitutes from East Asia (Joekes and Weston, 1994). In the majority of developing countries that have adopted open trade policies, such negative employment

[31] However, recent research by Kucera and Milberg (1999) suggests that in many OECD countries, trade expansion with developing countries from 1978 to 1995 resulted in employment declines that disproportionately affected women.

effects are believed to have been quite significant. However, unlike the positive employment effects, they are not well studied, so that their precise scale is unknown.

C. Assessing the employment effects of globalization

1. Women's position within the household

123. The general presumption is that paid employment improves women's position within the household. Depending on how the household is conceptualized, economists offer alternative accounts of how paid employment enhances women's status. According to one, the head of household is a benevolent male who makes rational decisions in investing for human capital.[32] Women's paid employment alters his perception of women's value and makes him aware of the returns to be had from investing in female human capital. The head of household then modifies the expenditure patterns of the household accordingly, choosing to spend more on women's and girls' health and education. In this conception, the social position of women ultimately depends on men's appreciation of women's earning capacity.

124. Alternatively, the household is seen (Sen, 1990) as a cooperative but at the same time a conflictual arena, where bargains are struck between men and women. Increase in women's paid employment is thought to modify the balance of power within the household. By bringing home cash income, women attain greater say in household expenditure decisions with respect to both consumption and human capital investment. As a result, a greater proportion of household expenditures than before goes to support women's (and girls') well-being and income-earning capacity. According to this view, the greater the material possibilities women have for leaving their husbands and living on their own, the stronger is their bargaining power in the household.

125. However, in practice, paid employment need not always mean empowerment for women. For instance, it is not unusual for young women, who form the majority of the EPZ workforce, not to have control over their earnings. Many of them have to remit the greater part of their wages to their natal households. There, the income is sometimes used to consolidate gender inequalities; for instance, to support advanced education of younger brothers (Wolf, 1992; Sainsbury, 1997). Likewise, studies on female factory workers in the garments sector in Bangladesh and Pakistan, of which some mention has been made, show that close to half of such women hand over their earnings to their husbands or to some other male member in their households (Hafeez, 1989; Zohir and Paul-Majumder, 1996). In other instances, especially in a rural setting, women workers are recruited by male labour agents (their father or a third party) to whom wages are paid, as is commonly the case in rural Indonesia and Tunisia. Moreover, time allocation studies from a diverse group of countries around the world suggest that in general, women's burden of household work and primary responsibility for childcare do not diminish with increased participation in paid work (UNDP, 1995). Thus, paid employment in many instances gives rise to an onerous "double day" for most women. Sometimes, when women begin to earn income of their own, there might be offsetting reductions in the non-market sources of income which they receive from men, particularly from the father of their children (Elson, 1999).

126. Yet, there are also signs that paid employment might be gradually weakening traditional gender values in many societies. Women factory workers' higher wages in the modern export sector, in relation to what unskilled men outside manufacturing can earn on

[32] This view of the household is based on Becker (1965) who assumed that the household head was male and benevolent. His assumptions have since been extensively criticized by feminist economists.

average, seem to confer women higher status and enhanced decision-making power within the households (Tiano and Fiala, 1991). Even the young women working in EPZs, who must remit their wages to their families, reportedly can accumulate savings which improve their future personal prospects. More importantly, many women workers from different countries feel an enhanced sense of self-esteem and an expansion of life choices as a result of wage employment (Tiano and Fiala, 1991; Amin and others, 1998). For instance, the same Bangladeshi garment workers discussed above are also reported to be quite conscious of the new freedoms that come with earning wages (Amin and others, 1998). Thanks to an independent source of income, they can possibly leave an intolerable marriage, enter another on more favourable terms, or live alone with their children — all unprecedented freedoms for women in a society with a strong gender hierarchy (Kabeer, 1995). Likewise, young women workers in the Philippines and Thailand appear to have acquired some freedom from domestic labour which only their brothers previously enjoyed (Sainsbury, 1997). Moreover, the fact that young women working in export manufacturing are delaying marriage might be a sign of resistance against the "double day",which for many of them is a hallmark of married life (Amin and others, 1998).

2. Conditions of work

127. Recent increases in women's employment in export-oriented industries in developing countries mostly involve poor quality jobs.[33] Negative factors, low wages and political docility appear to be the main factors behind the preferential demand for female labour in such industries. Long hours, congested dormitory living conditions, extremely strict supervision of work (no talking on the job, only short breaks, limited visits to the toilet) and long travel times to work are usually the norm. In smaller local firms, employment conditions have been generally worse than in MNCs and in EPZs (ILO, 1998; Lim, 1990). In both domestically and foreign-owned firms, an exceedingly high turnover rate of labour is common. Young women are employed with little or no training on the job, and quickly dispensed with on pregnancy or marriage. With a ready supply of substitute female labour, employers in general feel little pressure to improve conditions of employment for their workers.

128. Structural adjustment programmes of the 1980s and other periods of austerity are thought to have contributed to the sudden surge in the supply of women seeking paid work. By reducing male employment and levels of family income, these policies effectively drove women into the labour market in large numbers (Beneria, 1992). The big increase in incoming female labour has depressed real wages and led to further deterioration in working conditions. Women who could not find factory jobs have had to seek work in the informal sector under even worse conditions (Moser, 1997). Thus, despite exploitative conditions, export sector factory employment (even in small enterprises) has appeared superior to the other alternatives women have had (van Diermen, 1997).

3. Female-male pay differentials

129. Female-male pay differentials (or the so-called "gender wage gap") can be an important indicator of women's disadvantaged position in labour markets. In economies of all types, women typically earn two thirds of male incomes on average (Standing, 1989

[33] The quality of employment is a multidimensional index that comprises the wage, non-wage benefits, regularity of employment, length and terms of the employment contract, social protection (health, unemployment, pension), representation (trade-union or other means), working time, intensity of work, occupational risks, participation in decision-making, possibility of career advancement or skill upgrading, social status attached to a job (ILO, 1998c).

and 1998; Tzannatos, 1995 and 1999). Figure II.2 shows the wage differential between women and men in selected countries. Moreover, only a part of this gap in earnings can be explained by differences in educational attainment and job experience between women and men which suggest that discrimination on the basis of sex could be widespread (Birdsall and Sabot, 1991; Psacharopolous and Tzannatos, 1992).

130. There is mixed evidence about whether or where the gender wage gap has shown a tendency to diminish with women's increased participation in paid work. In some industrialized countries, such as the United States of America, the gap appears to have narrowed (Blau, 1998). In others, such as Japan, it has widened (Kucera, 1998). Similarly, in developing economies, trends vary. Women's wages, relative to men's, seem to have risen slightly in some developing countries, such as El Salvador and Sri Lanka, while in other developing countries or areas, such as Hong Kong SAR, Myanmar, Singapore and Taiwan Province of China, the wage gap has widened (Seguino, 1997a; Standing, 1999). Also, it is not clear if or to what extent this modest change reflects the general improvements in women's level of education relative to men's (Joekes, 1995; Cagatay, 1996).[34]

131. Even though the evidence is sparse, trade expansion and liberalization with FDI flows are likely to affect gender wage gaps in two ways: (a) through differential impact on the demand for female and male labour; and (b) through increase in bargaining power relative to organized workers in industries that are directly affected by the export of capital. FDI flows might be expected to drive up the wages of women workers because they tend to stimulate demand for female labour. By contrast, the increased ability of businesses to relocate all or some segments of their production across national borders puts a downward pressure on the wages of workers in the affected industries. The little existing research suggests that the latter effect has been stronger.

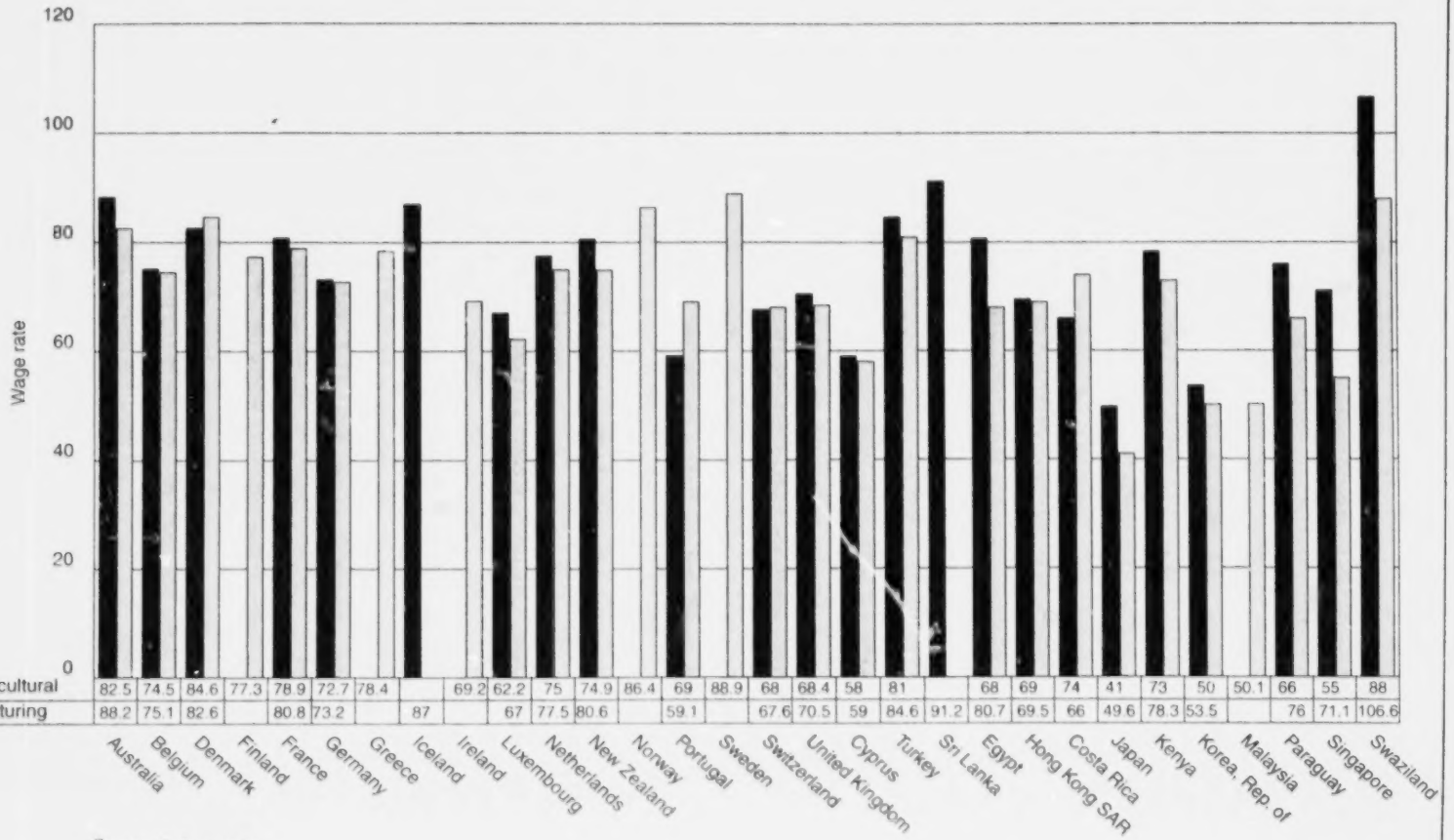
132. Evidence shows that the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) — and concomitant threat of moving offshore — helped manufacturing employers in the United States of America to successfully resist the demands for wage increases (Brofenbrenner, 1998). Likewise, FDIs by MNCs tend to move away from the newly industrialized economies, where wages and working conditions have improved, to less developed countries such as India, Mauritius, Sri Lanka, and more recently Bangladesh, China and Viet Nam (Lim, 1997). Women's wages relative to men's might thus be unlikely to rise if women are more heavily concentrated than men in industries where capital is "footloose" (i.e., where the threat by businesses to move offshore is highly credible). Indeed, that is likely to be the case in many low-wage sites in developing countries which attract FDI (Standing, 1999). Not surprisingly, wage differentials are especially marked in those developing countries or areas which pursue export-led industrialization or have EPZs.[35]

133. By contrast, in some developed economies, such as the United States, the forces of globalization appear to have adversely affected men's wages more than women's. Over the last two decades, trade liberalization and capital mobility have eroded well paying blue-collar wages in concentrated industries where men were the well entrenched insiders.

[34] There have been improvements in women's educational attainments relative to men in all regions, with improvements in the ratio of female to male years of education achieved first (between 1960 and 1975) in the high-performing Asian countries, and later (1970 onwards, from a high base) in Latin America and (from 1975 onwards, from a very low base) in South Asia (Barro and Lee, 1993).

[35] The divergent trend in the gender wage gap in Taiwan Province of China and the Republic of Korea might also be instructive. The gender wage gap has been steadily widening in the former since 1981, while marginally narrowing in the latter. In Taiwan Province of China, capital is more "footloose" than in the Republic of Korea. There is considerably less inward and outward FDI in the Republic of Korea in comparison with Taiwan Province of China (Seguino, forthcoming).

Figure II.2
Female-male wage ratios in manufacturing and non-agricultural jobs, in selected countries and areas, circa 1990



	Australia	Belgium	Denmark	Finland	France	Germany	Greece	Iceland	Ireland	Luxembourg	Netherlands	New Zealand	Norway	Portugal	Sweden	Switzerland	United Kingdom	Cyprus	Turkey	Sri Lanka	Egypt	Hong Kong SAR	Costa Rica	Japan	Kenya	Korea, Rep. of	Malaysia	Paraguay	Singapore	Swaziland
All non-agricultural	82.5	74.5	84.6	77.3	78.9	72.7	78.4		69.2	62.2	75	74.9	86.4	69	88.9	68	68.4	58	81		68	69	74	41	73	50	50.1	66	55	88
Manufacturing	88.2	75.1	82.6		80.8	73.2		87		67	77.5	80.6		59.1		67.6	70.5	59	84.6	91.2	80.7	69.5	66	49.6	78.3	53.5		76	71.1	106.6

Source: Anker, 1998

Increased international competition, which reduces the bargaining power of male workers in such industries, may be one explanation for the decreasing gender wage gap (Black and Brainerd, 1999). Three quarters of the decrease in the wage gap in the United States since late 1970s is estimated to stem from the decline in male real wages (Lawrence and Bernstein, 1994). At least in some countries, the narrowing of the gender wage gap reflects in part a "downward harmonization" between men and women.

134. Other factors could also have influenced gender wage differentials over the past decades. As discussed in detail below, there have been significant changes in the patterns of occupational segregation by sex around the world. Although women still earn less than men at every level of education, increasing numbers of women in higher-level jobs, especially in developed countries, have effectively improved women's aggregate labour-market income relative to men. Other important factors, depending on the region and the country, have been the following: the type of wage settlement (female-male pay differentials tend to be lower in countries with centralized collective bargaining);[36] the size of enterprise (within the same country, large enterprises tend to pay higher wages to and are more likely to hire women); technological change; the pattern of industrial development; and societal values about gender inequality.

4. Occupational segregation by sex

135. Despite the rapid and global increase in female paid employment in recent years, occupational segregation by sex remains a worldwide phenomenon.[37] Not always adverse for women, it can be an important indicator of women's disadvantaged position in labour markets. Indeed, higher levels of occupational segregation are generally associated with poorer labour-market conditions for women: lower pay, lower status, and more limited career opportunities, among others. It can also be a source of labour market rigidity and thus economic inefficiency.

136. As figures II.3 and II.4 show, women are more likely to be working in "men's jobs" than the opposite. But, as a rule, women are employed in a narrower range of occupations than men.[38] They dominate in clerical and secretarial jobs and in low-end service occupations (as shop assistants, waitresses, maids, hairdressers, dressmakers), and as professionals they are most likely to be teachers or nurses. These "female occupations" generally pay less and have lesser status and advancement prospects.

137. A distinction is usually made between two different forms of occupational segregation. One, called "horizontal segregation", refers to the distribution of men and women across occupations (e.g., women as maids and men as truck drivers); while the other, termed "vertical segregation", refers to the distribution of men and women in the job hierarchy in terms of status within an occupation (e.g., production workers versus production supervisors). Neither form of occupational segregation correlates well with the level of socio-economic development across countries. Both vary by region, however, which

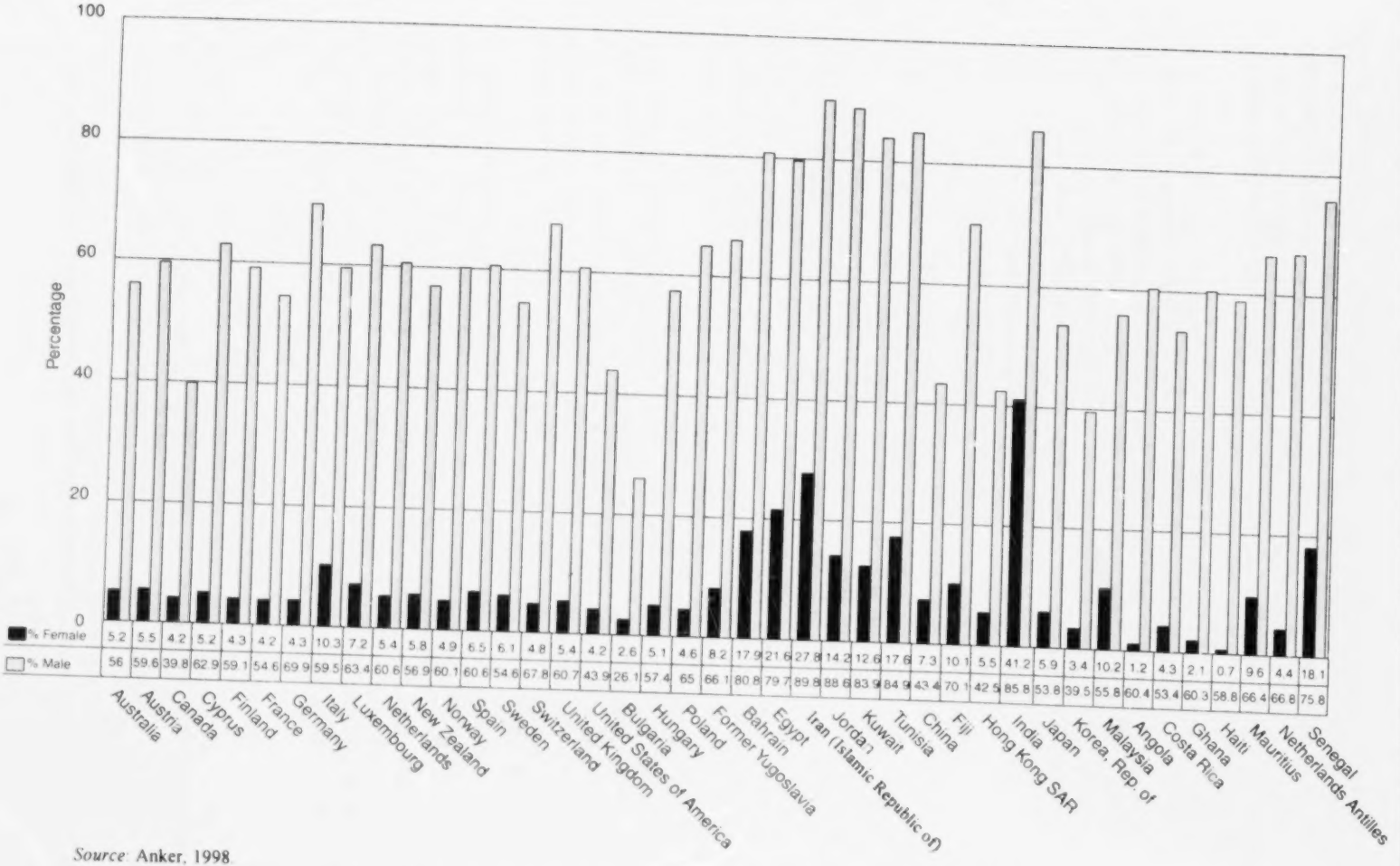
[36] The earnings gap is relatively small in Australia, Germany, Norway and Sweden, countries where there is centralized collective bargaining which emphasizes egalitarian wage policies in general. In Canada and the United States, the earnings gap is relatively larger because wage bargaining is decentralized, market-oriented and enterprise-level (Lim, 1996; Kucera, 1998).

[37] The discussion in this section is based on Anker (1998).

[38] Male-dominated, non-agricultural occupations are over seven times as numerous as female-dominated occupations.

Figure II.3

Percentage of female and male non-agricultural labour force in male-dominated (MDOM) occupations in selected countries or areas

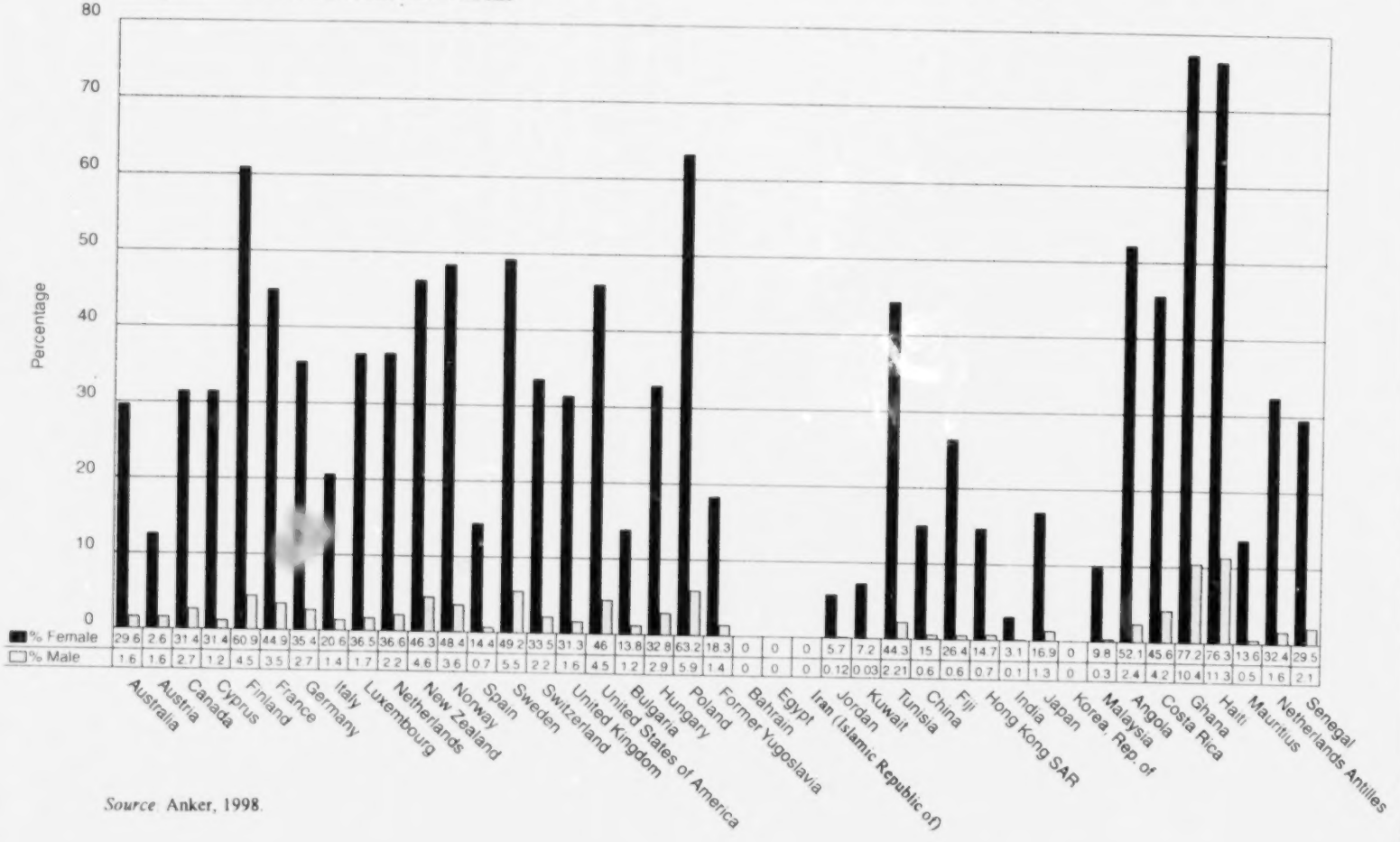


Source: Anker, 1998.

Note: Gender-dominated occupations are defined as those where at least 80 per cent of the workers are either male or female.

Figure II.4

Percentage of female and male non-agricultural labour force in female-dominated (FDOM) occupations in selected countries or areas



Source: Anker, 1998.

suggests that social, historical and cultural factors might be important in determining the extent of occupational segregation by sex.[39]

138. The level of horizontal segregation is lowest in the Asia and Pacific region and highest in the Middle East/North Africa. It is also relatively high in other developing regions, while of average magnitude in the OECD and transition economies in Eastern Europe.[40] Vertical segregation, by contrast, is higher in Asia and the Pacific than in other parts of the world. Export-led industrial development has apparently opened up many industrial occupations to women (thereby significantly reducing horizontal segregation) — without, however, decreasing gender inequalities within occupations in terms of pay, authority and career advancement possibilities (vertical segregation).

139. In the past two decades, the horizontal form of occupational segregation by sex has fallen considerably around the world. It appears to have fallen the most in countries where it was relatively high, and to have remained unchanged in countries where it was relatively low. The greatest sustained fall has occurred in several small developing and a few OECD countries. The rest of the OECD and transition countries, as well as large East Asian, Middle Eastern and North African countries, seem to have experienced little change, while in China and Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China there have been increases. In countries and regions where it has decreased, the reason is integration of men and women within occupations, rather than a shift in the occupational structure of employment. The expansion of "feminine" occupations has apparently been sufficient to absorb the marked increase in the female non-agricultural labour force. As the number of women entering the non-agricultural labour force has risen, many women have taken up jobs that were traditionally "men's", thereby reducing the occupational segregation by sex.

140. Occupational segregation by sex is often justified on the grounds that women have specific attributes which make them more suitable than men for particular types of work. It is argued that traditionally "female" occupations involve caring types of work, manual dexterity and experience at typical household activities, all of which women are expected to possess. Similarly, subservience and docility, the other characteristics commonly associated with female workers, are thought to shape gender employment patterns.

141. Today, women worldwide are better educated and hold more high-level professional jobs than ever before. Yet they rarely break through the so-called "glass ceiling" which separates them from top-level management and professional positions (ILO, 1997).[41] Despite recent progress, the glass ceiling remains relatively intact. Women hold less than 5 per cent of the top jobs in corporations. Even when they manage to rise to the top, female executives nearly always earn less than men. The higher the position, the more glaring is the gender gap. Moreover, the old contention that there is an insufficient number of qualified women to fill more top jobs is out of date. Though gender differences still exist in terms of choice of profession, women are increasingly taking up scientific and technological fields of study. With few exceptions, such as engineering, women are approaching men in educational attainment in most fields.

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[39] In his work on occupational segregation by sex, Anker (1998) distinguishes five "regions": OECD countries, transition economies, the Middle East and North Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and other developing countries and areas.

[40] There are also large and significant differences in occupational segregation by sex across OECD subregions. North America has the lowest level, while Scandinavia as a subregion has the highest. The reason for the high level of segregation in the latter seems to be related to the way in which the welfare state developed in Scandinavia, where the comprehensive monetization of the "care economy" has created occupations that have remained "female" (Anker and Melkas, 1998, p. 9).

[41] See box II.3.

142. In many industrialized countries, education has played an important role in providing women with access to better and higher-level jobs. Women have graduated in large numbers in medicine, law, accountancy and business studies, areas which have previously been dominated by male students. Growing employment opportunities and employers' willingness to recruit women have stimulated demand for courses in those areas. Although women still earn less than men for every level of educational qualification in most countries, the wage gap for more highly educated women is much smaller (ILO, 1998, p. 145). Improvement in pay scales that women workers have achieved in recent years, at least in some European countries and the United States, has resulted in part from changes in the pattern of occupational segregation, as women have been recruited at higher levels.

143. Educational attainment also appears to have helped women to maintain continuity of employment. One of the major risks that women face is the loss of occupational status when they withdraw from the labour market to have children or attend to other family responsibilities. Female employees in higher-level jobs in large organizations, especially in the public sector where "equal opportunity" policies often exist, are much more likely to be able to draw on various defensive measures to help them retain their position in the labour market. However, the risk of occupational downgrading following an absence from the job market is compounded if job training relies on informal work experience instead of recognized transferable skills. Indeed, under-representation of women in training systems — such as workplace-based training, lifelong learning, training programmes for the unemployed, training for new technology — might actually be reinforcing occupational segregation by sex (ILO, 1998, chap. 6).

144. The proportion of women has increased in administrative and managerial work, but the nature of women's career paths blocks their progress to top positions. At lower management levels, women are typically placed in non-strategic sectors and in personnel and administrative positions, rather than in professional and line management jobs leading to the top. Often, such initial disadvantages are compounded by exclusion from networks, both formal and informal, which are so essential for advancement within enterprises. Women are seldom found in product development and corporate finance, and thus there is a need for an explicit gender mainstreaming strategy to advance women in these areas, as outlined in box II.2. Participation in decision-making proves to be one of the most resistant areas for gender equality.

Box II.2

Strategies for gender-mainstreaming in economic decision-making at national and international levels

In order to bring a visible and sustainable change, consideration of the gender dimension has to be built into all aspects of institutional decision-making at national and international levels, from the overall philosophy and strategic objectives through operational and administrative policies and procedures, by all actors. The following actions can be suggested in this regard:

(a) Governments should establish a pool of and appoint qualified women to serve at the national and international boards and at the managerial level in international financial institutions (IFIs);

(b) IFIs should review the gender dimension during all phases of programme and project preparation and management. Such a review should be carried out by gender-balanced reviewing boards and in broad consultation with NGOs as well as other members of civil society;

(c) MNCs, which generally require skills exceeding the demands of one country only, should develop selection profiles for candidates to reflect new skills needed in the context of globalization, such as the ability to work effectively in a rapidly changing and diverse environment, and the commitment to gender issues;

(d) NGOs should monitor the progress of various actors in their efforts to eliminate barriers to women's participation in decision-making through monitoring and publicizing best and/or worst practices and providing rewards to the winners (United Nations, 1996).

Source: United Nations, 1996b.

Box II.3

The elements of strategies for women in management to break through the "glass ceiling"

- Regulatory mechanisms and legal frameworks to eliminate discrimination on grounds of sex
- Affirmative action and guidelines for genuine change in attitudes
- Adoption of appropriate steps by enterprises, institutions and Governments to ensure that employees are aware of obligations and rights, including those stemming from equal employment laws
- Positive action and equal-opportunity policies to level the playing field, and ensure equal opportunity and treatment for women in recruitment and promotion
- The development of ways, including more flexible working hours, reduced hours of work and adequate child- and elder-care facilities, to enable both women and men to combine a career with the raising of a family
- Mentoring for women to provide advice and develop their professional skills
- Appointment of corporate officers in the personnel departments of enterprises, with responsibilities for monitoring and promoting equal opportunities throughout the enterprise
- Access of women to business-skills training to help them run their own businesses
- "Networking" linkages among colleagues and peer groups

Source: ILO, 1997.

III. Internationalization of production, reorganization of work and "flexibilization" of labour

145. During the 1970s and 1980s, certain stages (or types) of production in the operations of multinational corporations (MNCs) were increasingly devolved to free-standing production units in other locations. The idea was to relocate low-skill, labour-intensive processes to low-wage areas while developed economies would specialize in the production of more skill- and capital-intensive goods. This type of delegation of production capacity was dubbed the "new international division of labour".

146. The United States of America was first to experience the relocation of many labour-intensive firms — making garments and footwear, and to a lesser extent electronics — to lower-wage sites in the Caribbean, East Asia, and Latin America, leading some to call this process the "deindustrialization of America" (Bluestone and Harrison, 1982). By the mid-1980s, Japanese firms were also engaged in a similar process, moving a number of labour intensive operations to South-East Asia. With the increased reduction in trade barriers, the process has gained further momentum around the world, as developed-country MNCs can export goods produced in low-wage sites back to developed economies with fewer restrictions.

147. One of the main characteristics of the latest phase of capital movements involves the development of cross-national production networks, in which MNCs leave sophisticated segments of production, product design, and finance in the home country, and disperse standardized operations, to lower-wage sites across the globe (Parisotto, 1993; Papalcuer, 1998). Thanks to new information and communication technologies, the "back office" functions, such as data processing and accounts, are also spatially dispersed as are other standardized operations involving manufacturing jobs. The expansion of international trade in services mentioned earlier is in some measure a reflection of this new trend.

148. Another characteristic of the current phase is the effort to make production globally more flexible in response to the variations in product demand and market turbulence that have been the hallmark of market liberalization. MNCs have come to rely on less dedicated, more flexible technology, and have reduced their permanent full-time workforce while increasing employment of part-time, temporary, and other contingent workers. While product innovation and design are gaining in importance as competitive strategies in this transformed production environment, cost cutting based on low wages and benefits, increased reliance on contingent labour and downsizing also remain important.

149. The destination of foreign direct investment (FDI) is determined by this complex strategy of competition. In most FDI flows between developed economies, the objective is usually the creation of new modes of linkages among MNCs in new product development and market expansion.[42] In the case of FDI flows to developing countries, the dominant motive is primarily cost cutting. In recent years, these flows have increasingly assumed diverse forms of "foreign indirect investment", where MNCs have frequently given standard elements of production to franchises, subcontractors or contracting manufacturers and engaged in joint ventures with local producers rather than setting up wholly owned subsidiary operations in developing countries.

150. In situations where relocating production abroad was not an option, employers substituted migrant, mainly female, labour for domestic workers in order to minimize costs.

[42] Precautionary measures to safeguard market access, in the event of rising protectionist barriers to trade in developed regions, is yet another motivating factor in those flows.

This has usually been the case in small and medium-sized companies in declining industries in developed countries, and in some EPZs which attracted young rural women from neighbouring countries.

A. Transformation of work

151. The defining characteristics of the changing economic environment in the era of globalization have been increased competition, introduction of new technology, internationalization of production, reorganization of work, and new patterns of labour mobility. The effects of these processes on labour markets and on gender are not uniform within and between different groups of countries. However, for our purposes, these effects can be summarized under three headings: (a) changing structure of output and the concomitant changes in the gender composition of the labour force; (b) "flexibilization" and "casualization" of labour: and (c) changing patterns of international labour mobility.

1. Changing structure of output

152. With the changing international division of labour, developed countries have increasingly shed manufacturing jobs (as a share of value added), while retaining skilled jobs in product development, engineering, advertising, and more generally, jobs that create intellectual property. Labour-intensive jobs were first exported from developed economies. Since then, more capital-intensive manufacturing jobs have also begun to be relocated to developing countries, as technology has become easier to transfer and production has become better organized globally. Women had lost manufacturing jobs disproportionately in the early stages, since they had been concentrated in labour-intensive industries. However, in the later stages, the loss of well-paid, blue collar manufacturing jobs by men began to exceed losses by women.[43]

153. The losses in female manufacturing employment have been more than compensated by the growth of service sector jobs, as much of the increase in employment in developed countries in the last two decades has been in the service sector. In the European Union, the number employed in services has increased by about 19 million between 1980 and 1996, compensating for the loss of 13 million jobs in industry and agriculture. The largest growth in employment has been in the "care" services (health, social services and education), various business services and environmental activities, and also in hotel and catering (Rubery, 1998). Because women have traditionally been over-represented in services, they have benefited disproportionately from the concentration of employment in these sectors.

154. The relative increase in demand for skilled workers (in both services and manufacturing) and reduced demand for non-college-educated workers have also given rise to a growing wage polarization, most evident in the United Kingdom and the United States of America. A significant part of the newly created jobs in services has been in information, and knowledge-intensive sectors, requiring high-level labour skills, while the rest has been in low-skilled, low-wage, labour-intensive occupations. In fact, the low-end service sectors have been the only place where low-skilled employment has been increasing. The rise in part-time work, largely for women, accounts for much, if not all, of this increase since the overall number of full-time jobs for both low-skilled men and women have been on the decline (ILO, 1998c, pp. 34 and 35).

[43] For instance, in Europe, since the 1980s, job loss has been concentrated in male-dominated manual occupations, which have fallen by 20 per cent.

2. Drive towards flexibility and labour market liberalization

155. In developed countries, MNCs efforts to make jobs more flexible have led to the proliferation of irregular forms of employment and increased outsourcing to the informal sector, and have quickened the relocation of labour-intensive production processes to low-wage sites in developing countries. Another outcome at the macro level has been the drive towards labour market "deregulation", i.e., elimination of protective regulations and labour market institutions that were seen to impede "market flexibility". The drive towards labour market deregulation and flexibilization of labour began in a few developed countries, and has since become a global trend. In most countries, standard labour legislation has come to cover fewer workers, as Governments have failed to enforce or have abolished labour regulations. The flexibility associated with female time and effort appears to have played an important role in this process, enhancing the capacity of businesses to adapt to changing market conditions. Firms have found it relatively easier not only to introduce flexible forms of employment, where the workforce was primarily female, but also to recruit women for these irregular jobs.[44]

156. One unintended casualty of these changes has been the "male breadwinner" model of employment — according to which core jobs are filled by men who, with families to support, need job security, opportunities to advance, and a living wage — as a growing number of jobs came to resemble those associated with women's "secondary" employment. Most of these new jobs pay little, are insecure, lack social protection and benefits and have little training or advancement prospects. Jobs that were once considered atypical (that is, from a man's point of view) have become commonplace for both men and women, although women still outnumber men by far in this type of so-called flexible employment. As discussed below in detail, not all flexible jobs accessible to women are necessarily bad, but they do pose a risk for marginalization in the labour market.

157. In developing countries, a resurgence in informal employment and home-based work has become a global trend under the drastically altered conditions of the 1980s. Economic restructuring, the ascendance of finance and services, labour market deregulation, and the globalization of production and markets were all seen to have created an economic environment that made it possible for MNCs to pass on the costs of increased competition and adjustment to changing market conditions to the "informal sector" — and especially to the workers (Sassen, 1998). As a result, while the informal sector has expanded, the core formal sector employment has decreased in size. However, it would be incorrect to consider informal activity as an exclusive attribute of labour markets in developing countries. For instance, in the United States of America, forms of informal employment are increasingly observed in sectors such as electronics and garment manufacturing, where workers from Latin America and Asia are often employed under sweatshop conditions (Fernandez-Kelly and Sassen, 1993; Christerson and Appelbaum, 1995). Again, in those industries, a substantial amount of informal sector employment is also documented among non-migrant workers in New England (Nelson and Smith, 1999).

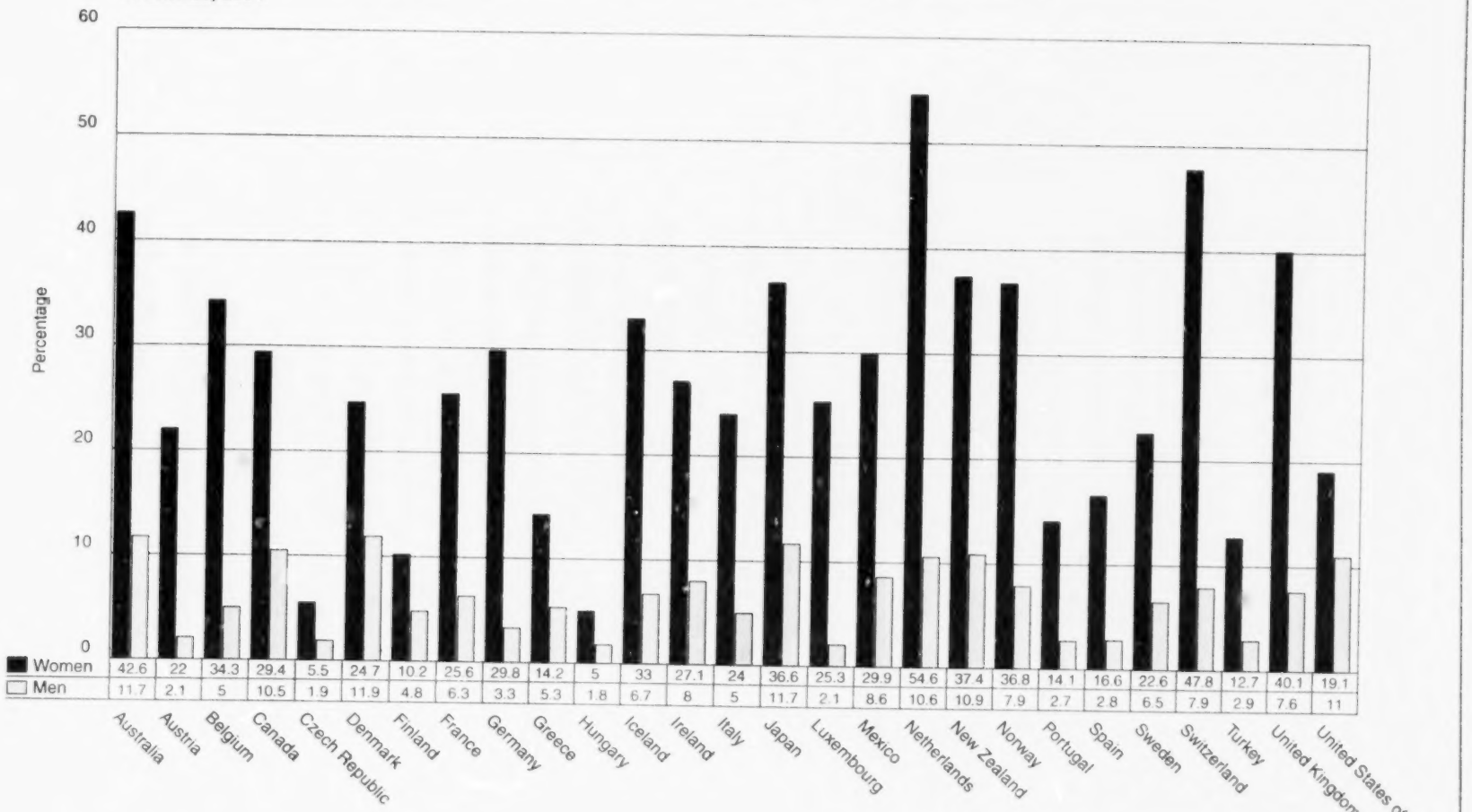
158. However, in developed countries, part-time work is the main flexible form of employment where women are found in large numbers (see figs. III.1 and III.2).[45] Even though it is generally argued that women often prefer part-time jobs because of their family

[44] Research in industrialized countries has shown that gender differences have played an important role in the employment policies of employers, especially in relation to employment structure and search for flexibility through non-standard employment contracts (Rubery and Wilkinson, 1994).

[45] In Europe, while 74 per cent of all employees working full-time had a contract of unlimited duration in 1996, only 59 per cent of women as compared to 83 per cent of men were so employed (Eurostat, 1998).

Figure III.1

Part-time employment as a percentage of total employment for men and women in selected countries, 1997

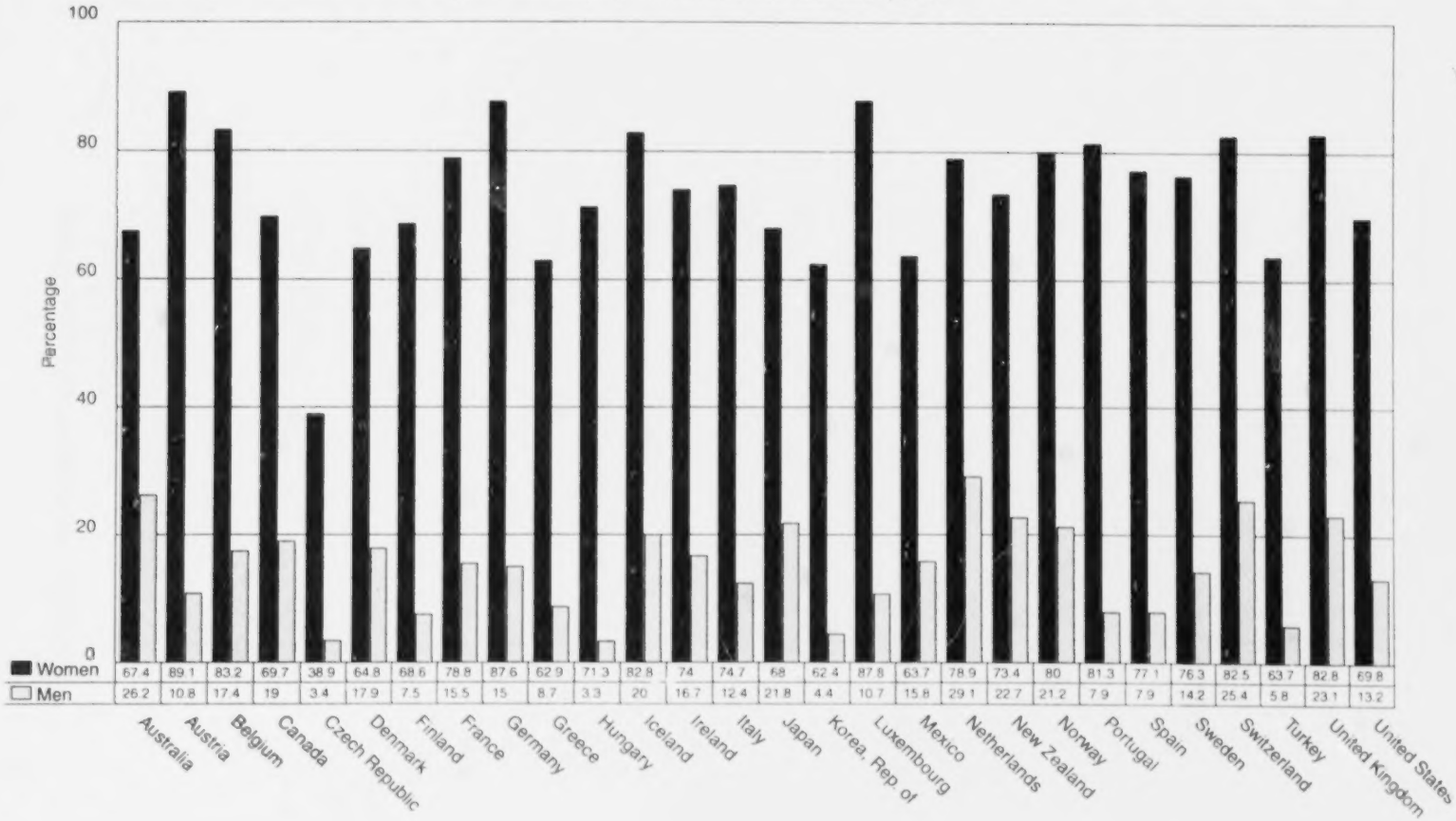


Source: OECD, 1998.

Note: The percentages shown for Australia, Iceland, Japan, Luxembourg and the United States of America are for 1996.

A/54/227

Figure III.2
Percentage of men and women in part-time employment in selected countries, 1997



Source: OECD, 1998.
Note: The percentages shown for Australia, Germany, Iceland, Japan, Luxembourg, the Republic of Korea and the United States of America are for 1996.

responsibilities, many of the women who can only find part-time employment would prefer full-time jobs. For instance, high percentages of women in France, Italy and Sweden have noted that they work short hours only because there are no full-time jobs. Similarly, over 40 per cent of women working part-time in Finland would prefer full-time work (Eurostat, 1998). Even though flexibility of hours in part-time employment can possibly be a plus for the worker, two main shortcomings make such jobs less than desirable for those who are compelled to take such jobs: low pay[46] (and no benefits) and, more importantly, no prospects for career advancement, training or skill enhancement. If, as expected, the pay premium for skilled labour continues to rise, the latter problem will only increase in importance.

159. The rest of this chapter focuses on different types of flexible labour, discussing part-time, informal sector and home-based work and migrant labour.

B. The rise of flexible jobs

1. Part-time work

160. The ILO defines a part-time worker as "an employed person whose normal hours of work are less than those of 'comparable full-time workers' who have the same type of employment relationship, are engaged in the same or similar type of work or occupation, or are employed in the same establishment, enterprise or branch of activity."[47]

161. Part-time work involves fewer hours and a lower weekly remuneration than full-time work. It also constitutes a different form of employment based on different principles, and on different terms and conditions from full-time jobs (Rubery, 1998). In part because of these differences, part-time work has played an important role in restructuring the wage and employment relationship in recent years, especially in developed countries.

162. Part-time work is universally gendered (see figs. III.1 and IV.2). In general, the extent and form of part-time work vary between men and women over the life cycle. Among women, it is often triggered by motherhood, while among men it is more likely to occur at the point of labour market entry or exit. However, women's involvement in paid work, and particularly the extent to which motherhood involves a shift into part-time work, varies markedly between countries. The gender division of labour within the home gives women greater availability for part-time work than men. But state policies also influence the labour supply plans and behaviour. Therefore, availability of workers for part-time work depends not only on household circumstances but also on MNC behaviour, labour market policies and regulation, as well as the wider labour market policies of the state (O'Reilly and Fagan, 1998).

163. On average, part-timers earn lower hourly wages than full-timers and lose out more on benefits than on hourly pay. The key issue, however, is whether part-time work is a "bridge" or a "trap" in terms of labour market participation (Bütchemann and Quack, 1989). Is it a marginalized form of cheap labour that entraps the worker in precarious employment, or is it an opportunity to enter paid employment and stay employed? It has been argued that although part-time work per se need not be marginalizing, remaining in this type of employment over long periods creates a disadvantage. "Missing out on training and promotion pushes these workers into a peripheral labour market in terms of qualifications

[46] In France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom, part-timers earn less than 60 per cent of the pay of full-timers for the same amount of work (Eurostat 1998).

[47] ILO Convention on Part-time Work, 1994 (No. 175).

and income, or lower lifetime accumulation of pension entitlements" (O'Reilly and Fagan, 1998).

164. The existence of a large body of part-time workers, providing a ready substitute, can constrain the growth of full-time employment at least in some sectors of the economy. In turn, the prevalence of part-time work tends to reinforce women's status as secondary earners and the unequal distribution of domestic work within the household. Moreover, evidence shows that the gender wage gap among full-time workers might be greater in countries where part-time work is more prevalent (Rubery, 1998).

165. In European countries, three categories of part-timers can be distinguished:[48]

(a) Contingent participants to the labour market who are not seen as prime or independent income earners. In many countries, part-timers have restricted rights to unemployment benefits, pensions and/or sick pay, particularly when they fail to meet earnings or hours thresholds and when combining work with other activities such as education and caring. Exemption from social protection payments may increase the immediate cash income of part-timers at the loss of forgone benefit entitlements. The emphasis on the contingent nature of the participation of the employees effectively removes the moral burden from employers, as well as Government, to provide income guarantees at times of no work, including holidays, sickness, downturns in demand and old age;

(b) Continuous participants working temporarily and voluntarily reduced hours. This category consists mainly of women who reduce hours of work over the period of childbirth and child-rearing while remaining permanent participants in the labour market. The right to work part-time is seen as a privilege. The employer or the State does not compensate for the gap in income between full and reduced hours. It is up to the family to make up any shortfall between subsistence needs and actual income. Most people working reduced hours retain the same rights to benefits and working conditions as full-timers. The opportunity to reduce hours is usually either guaranteed by the State or derives from the characteristics of the person and the job. For example, the civil service in France offers this opportunity to working mothers. But more generally, employers are more willing to offer such opportunities to retain employees with relatively high skills;

(c) Part-time work for full-time continuous participants in the labour market. They may require compensation for accepting to take up part-time work. This category may increase as Governments adopt policies to extend part-time work to non-traditional sectors of the labour force, and as more countries move towards a situation in which women are regarded as permanent and not contingent participants (Rubery, 1998). It must be pointed out, however, that when women are engaged in flexible working time, they receive very limited compensation for lost income. Men are much more likely to be offered schemes which enable them to retain full-time earnings. Where prime-age men are employed, variations in overtime are used to adjust to demand, but when variations are extreme or Government subsidies are available, short-time work with earnings compensation may be used to avoid redundancy. Such schemes are primarily found among male manual workers in heavy industry. There are very few situations in which women would receive compensation for hours not actually worked. In female areas of work, part-time jobs tend to be used to absorb fluctuations. The notion of the male breadwinner has resulted in short-time subsidies remaining a key part of labour market policies in many countries.

166. Overall, part-time workers tend to enjoy fewer employment protection rights than full-timers. Some efforts have been made to reduce the gap between the two categories of

[48] The remainder of this section draws heavily on Rubery (1998).

workers. The European Union, in particular, has tended to extend full-time standard employment conditions to part-timers on a pro rata basis. Employers have continued to show interest in creating and promoting part-time work even when required to meet pro rata conditions, as the advantages they draw from part-time work lie primarily in the opportunities to cut out unnecessary labour hours or to reduce the use of expensive overtime labour. Efforts to incorporate part-timers into the system of regulation have resulted in levelling down rather than levelling up wages and working conditions.[49]

2. The changing nature of the informal sector

167. Though certain activities might lend themselves more readily to "informalization", no intrinsic set of characteristics — other than responsiveness to economic opportunity and the fluidity of its borders — defines what informal activities are. Since 1972, when the term was first officially used by the ILO, there has been considerable debate on the definition and characteristics of the informal sector. The official international definition includes (a) unregistered enterprises below a certain size; (b) paid and unpaid workers in informal enterprises; (c) casual workers without fixed employers. Standards for enterprises to be considered informal, such as maximum number of paid workers and whether domestic servants and the agricultural sector are included in the informal sector, vary between countries. Also, in any given country, the legal and regulatory framework defines what is a registered/formal or an unregistered/informal enterprise.

168. Considered a defining feature of underdevelopment in the 1960s and 1970s, the informal sector was expected to wither away with economic growth. Contrary to those expectations however, throughout much of the developing world it has become the locus of employment growth since the 1980s. In an environment where austerity policies are dictated by structural adjustment programmes, by changing forms of production and by increased competition, the formal sector simply has failed to generate sufficient employment for the growing labour force. As the informal sector has grown in size, it has progressively become harder to associate the dichotomy between formal and informal sectors with that between traditional and modern.

169. On the one hand, the informal sector works as a huge "labour sponge" which mops up the labour force excess in the formal sector (ILO, 1991). Many of the informal sector establishments, owned mostly by self-employed producers with little capital, technology or skills, follows a subsistence logic. Lacking access to organized markets, credit, formal education and training institutions, and public services and amenities, such enterprises provide very low and irregular incomes and employment (Tokman, 1990). On the other hand, with its resurgency in the altered conditions of the 1980s, the informal sector has also become a part of economic restructuring, providing both flexibility and an opportunity to lower costs for formal sector establishments (Sassen, 1998). Far from being archaic, it has become an integral part of the formal sector.

170. Given the extensive heterogeneity of the informal sector, it is possible to delineate three distinct types of informal activity in terms of their level of productivity and the nature of their linkage to the formal economy. The first type is the "own-account" production of the self-employed urban and rural poor. Their level of productivity is very low and links

[49] The growing attention paid to part-time work is reflected at the international level. In 1994, the International Labour Conference adopted the Part-time Work Convention (No. 175) and Recommendation (No. 182). And in 1997, a framework agreement was signed between the social partners of the European Union — the European Trade Union Confederation, the Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe and the European Centre of Enterprises with Public Participation.

to the formal economy are, if any, marginal. The second type includes relatively more productive workers engaged in wage-labour in a capitalistic setting with close links to the formal sector. It is common for this part of the informal sector to subcontract to the formal sector, enabling the latter to lower costs and acquire flexibility in the face of demand volatility.[50] Finally, the third type is constituted by independent professionals providing highly priced, customized services and products to satisfy the demands of the swiftly expanding, high-income population.

171. Partly because they are under-represented in the formal sector, women comprise the majority of informal sector workers in most countries, especially in the first two segments. Informal activities in the first segment generate little value added, and incomes are so meagre that almost no savings materialize which are worth reinvesting to improve productivity or enlarge the scale of operation. They are a means of subsistence livelihood, rather than a form of entrepreneurial activity, and need rather than profit is the motivating factor (Joshi, 1997). With few marketable skills to their credit, women from poor households flock into this type of informal activities to generate whatever level of income they possibly can. They operate in a highly competitive environment characterized by ease of entry and exit, high rates of both start-up and failure, and for many, relatively short life cycles of economic activity. A large number of women also work at home, performing piece-rate work for manufacturing enterprises. This is more likely to fall under the second type of informal activities, where the increased demand for contingent female labour is associated with the restructuring of production and technological changes discussed above (Pollack and Judisman, 1997).

172. In many countries, national regulatory frameworks have been biased in favour of big business and public-sector enterprises. Small firms have often resorted to illegality to survive (De Soto, 1986). Barriers to entering full legality can take many forms and may rest in different elements of the work process: the status of labour, the conditions of work or the form of management (Castells and others, 1989). Even though some excessive bureaucratic requirements can rightly be blamed for setting up unnecessary barriers, government regulations are required to protect the general interests of the community. Thus, it might not always be easy to strike the right balance between regulatory measures that are essential for public health and safety, and those that erect unnecessary obstacles for the operations of informal sector units. The dilemma is to design a policy stance in favour of a dynamic informal sector capable of generating more jobs, higher incomes, but one that is also supportive of better conditions and more widespread protection for those attempting to earn a livelihood in it.

173. Of particular concern is, of course, the widespread non-compliance with labour legislation and basic labour standards within the informal sector. The precarious existence of the informal enterprises and the difficult nature of labour organization in this sector (see box III.1) are the ultimate sources of the problem. Until such enterprises are able to operate in a more stable environment not much progress on this score can be expected (ILO, 1991). Moreover, the recent erosion in standards of protection for formal-sector workers has only made it more difficult to improve working conditions in the informal sector.

[50] Also within this group are financially hard-pressed firms, for whom operating informally is a means of survival.

Box III.1
Self-Employed Women's Association of India

In the drought prone regions of Banaskantha District in Gujarat, the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) has begun activities to support women's economic development. SEWA is a trade union founded in 1972 which aims to organize self-employed women, since they have limited access to social services and because their employment is insecure. SEWA's members, totalling 220,000 in 1995, consist of small-scale traders and hawkers, home-based workers, manual labourers and service providers.

SEWA's trade union activities include securing minimum wages, obtaining licenses for street vendors, and educating home-based workers about legal rights. Due to the instability of self-employment, SEWA also helps members organize cooperatives for both income and social security to promote empowered employment.

SEWA was initially brought to the Banaskantha District by the Gujarat Government and the Centre for Women's Development in Delhi. The union evaluated women's needs, which were identified as a lack of regular employment. SEWA focused on developing local economic organizations to be run by women producers, and partnered with a Government-run programme called Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) to form the producer groups.

The groups have now developed into a district-level federation, the Banaskantha DWCRA Women's Association, which promotes producer groups and links them with markets, banks, Government agencies and institutions. It provides inputs, such as seeds for the nurseries and interest-free loans for house repairs. SEWA's role is focused on support and advocacy.

Source: Bhowmik and Jhabvala, 1996

3. Measuring the informal sector

174. The available statistics on the informal sector indicate that its size in relation to national output is quite large in most developing countries (see table III.1). However, the informal sector does not easily lend itself to statistical measurement, so the available figures should not be taken at their face value.

175. Differences between countries should be scrutinized, not only because of the intrinsic characteristics of a country but also because of variations in methodology adopted (De Jeu, 1998). A first methodological difference lies in the coverage of the surveys, i.e.:

(a) Whether they cover capital city, urban areas or the whole country;

(b) The branches of economic activities covered: the inclusion or exclusion of agriculture is a major factor of divergence;

(c) Whether they cover specific groups or workers. Here, the major difference is whether paid domestic workers are included.

176. A second main difference originates from the criteria applied in the definition of the informal sector, i.e., whether criteria include:

Table III.1
Contribution of informal sector in terms of employment and GDP

	Non-agricultural sector		*Total*	
	Informal sector as a share of non-agricultural employment	*Part of the informal sector in non-agricultural GDP*	*Informal sector as a share of total employment*	*Part of the informal sector in total GDP*
Benin 1993	93	57	41	37
Burkina Faso 1992	77	40	9	25
Chad 1993	74	45	12	31
Colombia 1992 (10 metropolitan areas)			55	18
Fiji 1990			43	2
India 1993-94		47		63
Madagascar 1995 (Antananarivo)		26		17
Mali 1989	79	42	13	23
Mauritania 1989	75	14		10
Mauritius 1992			24	19
Niger 1987				30
Philippines 1988			26	12
Senegal 1991		41		
Thailand 1995			6	1
Tunisia 1995	49	23	38	20
United Republic of Tanzania 1991			22	32
United Republic of Tanzania 1995 (Dar es Salaam)			30	65

Source: De Jeu, 1998.

(a) The size of the establishment or the enterprise;

(b) The criterion of non-registration, which is actually misleading since registration is governed by legal/administrative provisions which vary from one country to another;

(c) The criterion of legal organization of the enterprise (whether unincorporated/incorporated).

177. Notwithstanding problems of measurement, in the developing world the informal sector provides the majority of employment opportunities. For example, in Latin America and the Caribbean, 83 per cent of all new jobs between 1990 and 1993 were created in the informal sector. The large majority of the Latin American urban poor work in the informal sector. In India and Pakistan, the unorganized segment of the manufacturing sector is estimated to comprise 75 and 70 per cent, respectively, of total manufacturing.

178. In sub-Saharan Africa, the share of informal-sector employment in total employment ranges from less than 15 to more than 60 per cent, with highest percentages reported in the urban informal sector in Senegal (77 per cent) and Benin (80 per cent). The figures are

higher for the share of the informal sector employment in non-agricultural employment: 77 per cent in Burkina Faso, 79 per cent in Mali and 93 per cent in Benin.

179. Also, according to existing data, the majority of economically active women in developing countries, except perhaps in the Latin America region, are in the informal sector. In much of Africa, more than one third of women in non-agricultural activities work in the informal sector, and rates reach as high as 72 per cent in Zambia and 65 in the Gambia. Elsewhere, the proportion of women active in the informal sector totals more than 80 per cent in Lima (Peru), 65 in Indonesia and 41 in the Republic of Korea.[51]

180. There is reason to believe that these figures are likely to be much higher. As a recent study of Burkina Faso (Charmes, 1998) has shown, women remain the main source of underestimation of the size and contribution of the informal sector for at least three reasons:

(a) They are engaged in those informal activities which are the most difficult to capture and to measure: home-based work or outwork, street vending (often as an extension of a non-measured or non-registered manufacturing activity);

(b) They are engaged, more than men, in second or multiple activities, especially in rural areas;

(c) Their production activities are hidden behind their status of housewife, family worker in agriculture or street or road vendor, which limits their contribution to the commercial margins, overlooking their value added in the transformation process.

4. Home-based work

181. Homework is defined by two important characteristics. First, it involves a form of paid employment relation between the homeworker and the employer, subcontractor, agent or middleman. The agreement may be implicit or explicit, verbal or written; however, the form of payment is usually by the piece or unit of production. Second, the place of work is outside the premises of the employer. It may either be the home of the worker or some neighbourhood workstation that does not belong to the employer.[52]

182. In some cases, homeworkers own their own tools, while in others the employer provides the tools on loan or on a hire-purchase basis. Usually, homeworkers receive the raw materials from the employer (or buy them on the market) and sell the finished or semi-processed products back to him or her. It is often difficult to make a distinction between homeworkers and independent (self-employed) workers. Many of those counted as self-employed may in fact be disguised wage earners.[53] Especially in developing countries, the work of many of the self-employed may be controlled by others on whom the former are dependent for housing, credit or inputs.

183. The vast majority of homeworkers are women. Although the total number of homeworkers is difficult to estimate, it is believed to be increasing in both industrialized and developing countries (ILO, 1995c). In recent years, new forms of home-based

[51] The figures for Indonesia and Republic of Korea are prior to the recent crisis in East Asia.

[52] The ILO Convention on Home Work, 1996 (No. 177) defines homework as work carried out by a person for remuneration in his or her home or in other premises of his or her choice other than the workplace of the employer, which results in a product or service specified by the employer, irrespective of who provides the equipment, materials or inputs used. Workers who are "sufficiently" autonomous to be considered "independent workers" under national laws, regulations or court decisions are excluded from this definition.

[53] Wage earners receive a payment for their labour, whereas the earnings of self-employed represent the return on capital as well as labour, entrepreneurial skill and risk-taking.

production have been introduced into previously white-collar occupations, as a consequence of the introduction of information technologies. As a result, homeworking embraces an extraordinary diversity of occupations, payment systems and contractual arrangements, in a wide range of service and manufacturing industries in both developed and developing countries. It appears that technological change will continue to influence the ways in which homeworking develops in the future. "Telework", in particular, has a potential to gain in importance.

184. Industrial-type homework still predominates in most countries, whether industrialized or developing. The range of activities and products is very wide. Clothing, textiles, carpets and rugs and certain kinds of leatherworking (e.g., shoes) have traditionally been homework industries in Europe, South-East Asia, North America and Latin America. The equipment required is minimal, and in many cases tools or machinery are not power driven. The work is labour-intensive and can be fragmented and contracted out on a piecework basis.

185. In recent years, the range of homeworking activities has been expanding beyond those industries. High-technology manufacturing and electrical, plastic and light metal goods also have many labour-intensive processes, which can be broken up into self-contained or autonomous tasks. Ancillary tasks, such as sorting, cleaning, packaging and labelling, are labour-intensive and thus suitable for homeworking.

186. Homework in the service sector is also gaining ground. In such countries as France, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, there is evidence that the number of persons working at home in the service sector greatly exceeds those recorded in the manual homework sector. Much of that work is of a clerical nature: typing, word- and data-processing, invoicing, editing and translating (ILO, 1995c).

187. In Europe, the proportion of women among homeworkers varies from 90 to 95 per cent in Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy and the Netherlands, and reaches 84 per cent in France, 75 per cent in Spain and 70 per cent in the United Kingdom. Married women with children predominate (mostly in the age group of 25 to 45). In a number of industrialized countries, homework is concentrated in traditional industrial regions and in large urban areas where large numbers of recent immigrants (often illegal) and ethnic minorities live.

188. In developing countries, women also constitute the great majority of homeworkers. For example, in India 90 per cent of the bidi (cigarette) workers are women.[54] A survey in Viet Nam found that 90 per cent of homeworkers were women, among whom over 37 per cent belonged to female-headed households.[55] In industrial homework, men often take on the role of subcontractors or intermediaries, or carry ancillary tasks, such as collecting and delivering materials and finished works. They seldom work at home themselves or assist the women. In some countries, however, there are occupations, often the more skilled or craft-oriented ones, where men are active. For example, in handloom weaving families in India, women and children tend to do the preparatory work while men do the actual weaving.

189. In rural areas, agricultural policies have sometimes resulted in an increase in the number of landless poor, who look for seasonal farm jobs and other types of work in the agricultural off-season. Even in "traditional" rural households, women find themselves increasingly compelled to supplement family income by homework. Field studies from Asia and Latin America suggest that home-based work is closely related to growing poverty and landlessness among the rural population (ILO, 1995c).

[54] See box III.3.

[55] See ILO (1995b).

190. Homework, it is argued, provides advantages to both employers and workers. To employers, homeworkers provide flexibility and an opportunity to reduce labour costs. While employers normally pay benefits and social security for "regular" wage workers, they do not have to do so for homeworkers. Paid at a piece rate rather than on a time basis, homeworkers' earnings are considerably less than those of wage workers for a given quality and quantity of work. Work done by homeworkers is less costly to employers also because many production-related expenses, such as rent, power, water and tools are borne by the workers themselves. In terms of labour flexibility, employers benefit from homeworking in three ways: a greater freedom to vary the volume of production; greater flexibility in responding to the fluctuations and irregularities in market demand; and greater opportunity to vary the nature of the work.

191. For many women homework is the only option to earn income. They are women who are home-bound either because they need to look after young children, sick or old family members, or those who are constrained by prevailing family or societal norms from working outside their homes.

192. However, homeworking generally involves low pay, invisibility, long hours and poor working conditions. Compared with in-factory workers, who produce goods of the same quality and quantity, they are paid considerably less. They are often semi-skilled and poorly educated. When they are working in economies where wage jobs are scarce and cheap labour is abundant, they are fearful of asking for higher rates, thinking that the contractors will shift to other homeworkers if they did. Furthermore, most have no networks or other organizational basis for bargaining[56] or comparing the current wage rates.

193. Homeworkers are subject to insecurity of work availability. They receive income only when work is available. Because they are paid at a low rate, homeworkers have to work long hours in order to earn as much as possible. Female homeworkers usually combine domestic work and paid work in the same premises. The "invisible" female workers often work well over the statutory daily working hours or working days. The work situation is worst among female-headed households, in particular for single women with young children. There is also the danger that home-based workers may use their children as part of the family labour force and deny them educational opportunities. Child labour may be used especially where women are involved in subcontracting work and where additional hands are helpful for meeting tight deadlines.

194. Access to social benefits and protection is also a problem for homeworkers. Normally, they are not covered by the national labour legislation, and as a result get into clandestine working arrangements. Since the majority of homeworkers in developing countries undertake work under verbal agreement, it is difficult to establish a legal employer-employee relationship. Workers are often unaware of whatever rights and privileges they might have where they live in and work. They have no access to old-age pension, health and disability insurance, maternity protection, paid leave and labour compensation.

195. "Some types of homework involve occupational health hazards but as national authorities are not cognizant of the poor working environment of homeworkers, and there is generally no labour inspection system applied to homework in developing countries, the workers could be exposed to occupational health hazards caused by poor working conditions as well as instruments and harmful chemicals. Long hours of work in the same posture and chairs that are not well designed, could also cause back and neck ache and the lack of sufficient light also damages eye sight" (ILO, 1995a).

[56] However, the lack of organizational support might be changing; see boxes III.1 and III.2.

Box III.2
Unionization among homeworker women in Tamil Nadu, India

Most workers in the bidi (hand-rolled cigarettes) industry are women. There are over 500,000 bidi workers in Tamil Nadu State, and 50,000 in the Madras-Chengalpet District, who work in this sector, which is based on a subcontracting system. This means that there is no direct contact between bidi companies and the women, who work at home. Rather, the subcontractor provides the workers with the tobacco leaves to be rolled.

Bidi making involves three steps, which are often performed by different members of the family. In some areas, for instance, women cut the leaves, men roll the bidi and children close the tops. However, the minimum wage is set on the assumption that the work is done by one person, and it is also lower in Tamil Nadu than in surrounding states. This results in poverty and perpetuation of child labour, as well as lower wages for women, as they are mainly involved in the leaf cutting and not the more lucrative Bidi rolling done by men. Women are also cheated out of Government support funds by employers and the person in contact with the subcontractor.

The Tamil Nadu Bidi Worker's Union, which was formed with the assistance of the Centre for Labour Education and Development, is struggling for minimum (and fairer) wages for the different stages of production, and held a strike for better working conditions. The union has also provided support for workers to access education funds, welfare and housing. The latter is particularly important since most live in the slum areas of cities, which lack infrastructure. Women form the majority of membership, but there is also a women's committee in order to foster leadership.

Source: Ramakrishnan, 1996.

C. Changing patterns of international labour mobility

196. Labour migration is basically a response to disparities in socio-economic levels of development between and within countries. Recent breakthroughs in information technologies have created greater awareness around the globe about the conditions and opportunities in developed regions of the world, while advances in transportation have made long-distance travel much less costly and accessible. At the micro level, labour migration is usually related to the desire to enhance one's standard of living, and can result from decisions that are either made individually or collectively as a part of, say, survival strategies at the level of the household or other social networks.

197. The first half of the twentieth century witnessed a wave of migration mainly from Europe to the New World, as well as considerable shifts of population within Europe. After the Second World War, the period of decolonization was characterized by yet another round of major population movements around the globe. For much of the second half of the century, the main impetus behind migration has been economic, though there were periods when political motivations have predominated. Much of the migration in the 1960s, for

instance, involved large-scale movement of excess labour from the South to the North, which was experiencing labour shortages.

198. Since the 1970s, this type of permanent labour migration has been declining around the world, in large part because of increased restriction introduced against international labour mobility by developed countries.[57] However, new and complex forms of population movements have since emerged, reducing much of the usefulness of the old binary dichotomies — permanent/temporary, economic/political, rural/urban, voluntary/involuntary — in understanding, let alone classifying, migration patterns. These new flows can be summarized under five interrelated categories: (a) population displacements owing to war/famine/environmental degradation/civil conflict, with economic consequences; (b) reverse and return migration from North to South, and from urban to rural; (c) shuttling between two or more worlds with strong links in all; (d) illegal forms of international migrant labour arrangements, including trafficking in women; and (e) temporary migration of "rented" labour.

199. A striking feature of the new flows involves the significant increase in the number of women and their rising ratio to men in the migrant stock (Lim, 1998; Skeldon, 1998). Although men still outnumber women in the total, the annual growth rate of the female migrant stock was higher than that of men from 1985 to 1990 in four of six global regions (see table III.2),[58] and its level has been rising steadily since 1965 (see table III.3). Women's profile has been increasing, especially in relation to the last two forms of population movements listed above. In addition to their rising numbers, they also increasingly appear as principal agents, migrating either on their own or as the primary earner in their household.

200. Existing data indicate that most female migrant workers engage in traditionally female occupations in the service sector, namely domestic work, nursing, teaching, entertainment and manufacturing (in light industry, such as textiles, electronics and toys). Of those, the domestic and entertainment sector, including prostitution, and assembly-line work in labour-intensive manufacturing attract unskilled female migrants. Female migrant workers can be delineated into three groups: professional and highly skilled workers, manufacturing workers on short-term contracts and domestic or entertainment sector workers.

201. Some female professionals in such traditionally female occupations as nursing have been in demand in developed countries and the oil-rich Middle East (Skeldon, 1998). For instance, in the Philippines, a major exporter of nurses, it is estimated that 70 per cent of the annual total of 7,000 graduating nurses migrate overseas.[59] Women's numbers have also been increasing within the growing "transnational communities" of highly skilled professional workers (Galtung, 1996). The globalization of financial services and the expansion of MNCs have contributed to the creation of an international class of highly skilled professionals, managers and consultants, whose work experience has come to

[57] Paradoxically, labour is currently more mobile and, at the same time, more stationary. "... [B]arriers are increasingly being erected to the free movement of labour at precisely the same time as demand for transnational movement of workers is rising" (Skeldon, 1998, p. 4).

[58] In 1990, the numbers of migrant women and men worldwide were, respectively, 57.1 and 62.6 million (United Nations 1997a). However, because those figures do not reflect undocumented flows (and given the increased magnitude of international trafficking in women), they in all likelihood underestimate relatively more the true number for women (Lim, 1998).

[59] It has been suggested that the main reason for migration of these professional women is to increase their income and to have a better opportunity for career development (Stalker, 1997). In 1991, a Filipino nurse could earn three times as high an income in the Gulf, and eighteen times as high in the United States, than she could in the Philippines (see ibid).

Table III.2

Growth of the estimated female and male migrant stocks by region and selected countries, 1965-1990

	Increase in migrant stock (millions)						Average annual growth rate (percentages)					
	Female			Male			Female			Male		
	1965-75	1975-85	1985-90	1965-75	1975-85	1985-90	1965-75	1975-85	1985-90	1965-75	1975-85	1985-90
World total	5.1	9.9	7.1	4.2	10.8	7.4	1.4	2.2	2.7	1.0	2.2	2.5
Developed countries [a]	4.5	4.8	3.1	3.4	4.9	3.2	2.7	2.2	2.4	2.0	2.3	2.5
Developing countries [b]	0.6	5.1	4.1	0.8	5.9	4.3	0.3	2.2	2.9	0.3	2.1	2.6
Africa	1.5	0.8	1.5	1.7	0.5	1.6	3.7	1.5	4.7	3.1	0.8	4.2
Northern Africa	0.0	0.5	-0.1	0.1	0.6	-0.1	-0.1	6.9	-2.1	1.8	6.9	-1.7
Sub-Saharan Africa	1.5	0.3	1.6	1.6	-0.1	1.7	-1.2	0.7	5.9	3.3	-0.2	5.3
Asia (including China)	-1.0	3.8	2.2	-0.6	5.1	2.3	-0.7	2.4	2.4	-0.4	2.[illegible]	2.0
Eastern and Southern Asia [c]	-0.2	-0.1	0.3	-0.1	-0.1	0.1	-0.5	-0.3	1.6	-0.2	-0.[illegible]	0.5
Southern Asia	-1.4	1.9	0.8	-1.7	1.7	0.8	-1.8	2.3	1.7	-1.9	1.9	1.5
Western Asia	0.6	1.9	1.1	1.1	3.5	1.4	2.5	5.3	4.3	3.5	6.[illegible]	3.6
Latin America and Caribbean	0.0	0.4	0.5	-0.1	0.2	0.6	0.2	1.4	3.0	-0.3	0.6	3.3
Caribbean	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	2.8	2.5	2.8	1.7	2.0	2.8
Central America	0.0	0.3	0.4	0.0	0.3	0.6	0.0	7.8	14.1	-0.8	8.1	16.5
South America	0.0	0.1	-0.1	-0.2	-0.1	-0.2	-0.1	0.2	-0.4	-0.8	-0.[illegible]	-1.0
Northern America	2.0	2.4	1.6	0.4	2.9	1.9	2.7	2.6	2.8	0.6	3.6	3.6
Canada	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	1.8	1.3	1.9	1.3	0.9	1.8
United States of America	1.7	2.2	1.4	0.2	2.8	1.7	3.0	3.0	3.0	0.4	4.4	3.8
Europe and the former USSR	2.2	1.9	1.1	2.7	1.5	1.0	2.7	1.9	1.9	3.0	1.4	1.7
Economies in transition [d]	-0.2	-0.1	-0.1	-0.2	-0.1	-0.1	-1.7	-0.7	-1.4	-1.7	-0.9	-1.5
Western Europe	2.4	2.0	1.2	2.8	1.6	1.1	3.6	2.3	2.2	3.7	1.6	1.9
Oceania	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3	3.2	2.3	2.9	2.5	1.9	2.3
Australia	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	3.2	2.6	3.1	2.5	2.2	2.6
New Zealand	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	3.0	0.1	1.5	1.9	0.1	1.0

Source:

Lim, 1998. Original data drawn from *Trends in Total Migrant Stock, Revision 4* (POP/1B/96/1/Rev.4), database maintained by the United Nations Population Division.

[a] Comprising all regions of Europe and North America, Australia-New Zealand and Japan.

[b] Comprising all regions of Africa, Asia (excluding Japan) and Latin America, and regions of Melanisia, Micronesia and Polynesia.

[c] Excluding China.

[d] Including Albania, Bulgaria, former Czechoslovakia, the former German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and former Yugoslavia, and excluding the former USSR.

Table III.3
Estimated female and male migrant stocks (including refugees) for selected years and regions

Major area or region	Migrants (in millions)						Percentage of women in total migrant stock		
	Female			Male					
	1975	1985	1990	1975	1985	1990	1975	1985	1990
World total	40.1	50	57.1	44.4	55.2	62.6	47	48	48
Developed countries [a]	19.2	24	27.1	19.1	24	27.2	50	50	50
Developing countries [b]	20.9	26	30.1	25.3	31.2	35.5	45	45	46
Africa	4.9	5.7	7.2	6.3	6.8	8.4	44	46	46
Northern Africa	0.5	1	0.9	0.6	1.2	1.1	46	46	45
Sub-Saharan Africa	4.4	4.7	6.3	5.7	5.6	7.3	43	45	46
Asia (including China)	13.5	17.4	19.4	16.1	21.4	23.3	46	45	45
Eastern and Southeastern Asia [c]	3.6	3.5	3.6	4.2	4.1	4	46	46	48
Southern Asia	7.3	9.2	10	8.3	10	10.8	47	48	48
Western Asia	2.7	4.6	5.7	3.7	7.2	8.6	42	39	40
Northern America	8.2	10.6	12.2	6.9	9.8	11.7	54	52	51
Canada	1.7	2.0	2.2	1.7	1.9	2.1	50	51	51
United States	6.4	8.6	10.0	5.1	7.9	9.6	56	52	51
Latin America and the Caribbean	2.7	3.1	3.6	3.1	3.3	3.9	47	49	48
Caribbean	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.5	46	47	47
Central America	0.2	0.5	0.9	0.2	0.5	1.1	50	49	46
South America	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.5	2.4	2.2	47	49	50
Europe and former USSR	9.3	11.2	12.3	10.3	11.8	12.8	47	49	49
Countries with economies in transition [d]	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.1	1	0.9	55	55	55
Western Europe	7.9	9.9	11.1	9.1	10.7	11.8	46	48	48
Oceania	1.6	2	2.3	1.7	2.1	2.4	47	48	49
Australia	1.3	1.6	1.9	1.4	1.7	2.0	47	49	49
New Zealand	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	50	50	50

Source:
Lim, 1998. Original data drawn from *Trends in Total Migrant Stock, Revision 4* (POP/1B/96/1/Rev.4), database maintained by the United Nations Population Division.

[a] Comprising all regions of Europe and North America, Australia-New Zealand and Japan.
[b] Comprising all regions of Africa, Asia (excluding Japan) and Latin America, and regions of Melanisia, Micronesia and Polynesia.
[c] Excluding China.
[d] Including Albania, Bulgaria, former Czechoslovakia, the former German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and former Yugoslavia, and excluding the former USSR.

resemble that of the personnel of international organizations and diplomats. A small but rising number of these transnational professional jobs are held by women. This group of migrant women is seldom, if ever, at the centre of policy discussions, mainly because the problems they face usually pale in comparison with those experienced by non-professional female migrants.

1. Temporary migration of "rented" workers in manufacturing assembly

202. In the context of globalization, the world is described as a huge bazaar with nations peddling their workforces in competition against each other, offering the lowest prices for doing business (Donahue, 1994, p. 47). "Employers can substitute foreign for domestic workers by relocating production abroad or by hiring migrant workers as part of their cost-minimization strategies to respond to global competition" (Lim, 1998, p. 5). In other words, labour-intensive jobs are either located to where cheap labour is available, or when relocation is not an option, "rented" labour is moved to where the jobs are. In this process, unskilled female migrants provide yet another source of cheap, flexible labour.

203. In contrast with large firms, small and medium-sized companies in industrialized countries usually lack the resources required in relocating to low-wage sites. This explains why the demand for foreign workers in such countries or areas as Japan, the Republic of Korea and Taiwan Province of China has been rising at a time when their companies' investments in other countries are also increasing. In these countries, "... the combination of a near empty reservoir of flexible domestic workers, a still-significant small-scale manufacturing sector, and constraints on the firms' flexibility combine to create a demand for foreign workers" (Migration News, 1996, p. 2). During economic booms prior to the 1980s, those countries were able to fill newly created jobs with "baby boom" workforce entrants, ex-farmers and women entering the labour force.[60] However, as these reservoirs of domestic labour dried up, migrant workers became the "shock absorbers" in the 1990s for these economies (Migration News, 1996, p. 2). A survey in the Republic of Korea found that "the employment of foreign workers is a small-industry phenomenon, and that two thirds of the firms interviewed claimed that older Korean workers and housewives cannot perform the intense physical labour which younger foreign workers are able to" (Lim, 1997, p. 8). Similarly, the declining segments of manufacturing in the United States of America, characterized by labour intensive production jobs, have been a source of increasing demand for unskilled female migrant workers (Sassen, 1993). They are also the sectors in which production is increasingly relocated to low-wage countries.

204. In the last two decades, the process of relocation of labour-intensive production from high-wage to low-wage countries has also stimulated a rural exodus of female labour to urban centres within and as well as beyond national boundaries in many developing countries. This has been particularly significant in the newly industrialized economies of East and South-East Asia and Latin America, where the export processing zones (EPZs) have been a magnet for temporary female rural-urban and international migration. Companies relocated in Thailand, for example, have attracted a large number of young women from rural areas to work in light industry (principally textiles, electronics and toys). In the period 1985-1990, there were 100 females for every 87 male migrants to Bangkok from the rural areas (Migration News, 1996, p. 15).[61] However, the economic crisis that

[60] Heyzer (1982) documents female rural-urban migration as well as migration from West Malaysia to labour-intensive industries of Singapore.

[61] Unskilled male migrants engaged mostly in the construction industries (Skeldon, 1998, p. 15).

began sweeping Asia in 1997 had shrunk industrial production and made job opportunities exceedingly scarce in the cities of South-East Asia, forcing people who lost their jobs to return to the rural areas they came from (Ghosh, 1998; Richburg, 1998).

205. In Latin America, although migration towards countries outside the region has traditionally been to North America, principally the United States of America, during the 1970s and 1980s, rapid industrialization in some Latin American countries, particularly the oil producers in the region, prompted intraregional flows. Argentina, Mexico and Venezuela were the major poles of attraction for subregional migrants. Intraregional labour migration flows can be expected to accelerate in the coming years, with progress towards economic integration and improved economic performance. Some subregional redirection of population flows is already taking place towards Chile, which is experiencing fast growth in exports and income, while neighbouring Argentina, a traditional destination for migrants from Bolivia and Paraguay, is suffering from recession and high unemployment rates.

2. Domestic and entertainment sector workers

206. In addition to the "3-D" (dirty, dangerous, difficult) jobs which workers in rich countries no longer want, the international demand for domestic workers has provided women with one of the few opportunities to migrate legally as workers to developed countries. Migrant domestic workers enhance the mobility of developed country women by freeing them from household chores, so that they — with rising levels of income and education — can pursue professional careers. The demand for domestic work is likely to increase over time with the improvement of job opportunities for women in developed-country labour markets. The ageing population in developed countries, which increases the need for caring labour, provides yet another source of demand for migrant workers. The persistence of gender segregation (which stipulates that both caring labour and domestic work are female jobs) implies that these trends will continue to disproportionately affect women migrant workers compared to men.

207. With a growing demand in such activities as domestic work, entertainment (a large segment of which are sex workers) and, to a lesser extent, nursing and teaching, West Asia is another region where female labour migration has been flowing in. In the oil-rich Middle Eastern countries, rising incomes have given rise to a new lifestyle, where "... among Arab families having a foreign domestic helper became a symbol of prosperity" (Alunan, 1993). In some of these countries, such as Kuwait, the growth of employment by Asian female migrants has paralleled the increase of employment among local women with rising levels of educational attainment (Russell, 1995). In the newly industrialized countries of East Asia, the demand for domestic servants has also risen among the affluent middle-income groups, as women from those groups have been entering the formal labour market in increasing numbers (Lim, 1998, p. 9).

208. Migrant women suffer multiple forms of discrimination and violence, because of their migrant status as well as their gender; and in the case of international migration, because they are foreigners as well. As mentioned, an increasing share of female labour migrants has concentrated in domestic work and the entertainment sector. In many regions, countries and areas that have a growing demand for migrant domestic workers, (e.g., Western Asia and Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China), special provisions exist to admit foreign domestic workers. But while legal admission guarantees the fair treatment for domestic migrant workers, it also binds the worker to a particular type of employment and even to a particular employer. Isolated working conditions, long hours and lack of social contacts are usually the norm. Moreover, the dependence on the employer for the right to

stay in the host country, and the lack of sufficient legal protection make migrant domestic workers highly vulnerable to violence, both sexual and otherwise (Eelens, 1995).

209. Despite these problems, for many Governments the export of female labour has become a major economic strategy of generating foreign exchange badly needed to address economic, social and political problems.[62] The main countries that have been sending out female migrant workers are Indonesia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand, and the main receiving countries or areas are Brunei, Hong Kong SAR, Japan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Singapore and Taiwan Province of China (United Nations, 1997a). By the end of 1995, there were at least 152,000 foreign domestic servants in Hong Kong, and over 80,000 in Singapore. It has also been reported that by 1996, there were 133,000 housemaids in Kuwait (United Nations, 1997a, p. 4).

210. Restrictions on admission of migrant labourers in many of the receiving countries have stimulated a marked increase in the number of undocumented migrants who are willing to undertake domestic work under illegal conditions. Being subject to police harassment, raids and detention, undocumented migrants are particularly prone to abuse and violence, as they are unprotected and often persecuted in the host country. Two NGOs working directly with overseas domestic workers in the United Kingdom,[63] documented in detail more than 2,000 cases of ill-treatment and extreme abuse of migrant domestic workers, many of whom were undocumented. There is ample evidence to suggest that the number of women migrating through illegal, undocumented and clandestine channels has increased (United Nations, 1996). It has been estimated that there are 700,000 illegal female migrants in Asia alone (Migration News, 1996).

211. Entertainment-related jobs constitute another gender-based sector which favours female migrants. Because migrants who work in the sex industry as "entertainers" or as prostitutes often do so illegally and are considered outcasts, their numbers are difficult to ascertain. Existing data suggest that such economic activity is increasing, and often occurs in the context of human trafficking. In 1994, for example, some 90,562 persons entered Japan as "entertainers", up from 75,091 in 1990. The majority of these entertainers were from the Philippines and Thailand (Skeldon, 1998).

212. Eastern Europe is one of the regions that has been a significant source of out-migration of women as sex workers. The increase in unemployment and poverty in the transition economies in Eastern and Central European countries have affected women more than men, spurring them to engage in cross-border movements in search for work opportunities. "Suitcase tourism" has become a common occupation for many women, who trade in goods brought from neighbouring countries. Frequent movements across borders have also exposed them to other means of earning a living, the most visible form of which is prostitution. A major prostitution-related trafficking flow has developed from Central and Eastern Europe (mainly from Romania, the Russian Federation and Ukraine), supplying sex-industry workers to Western European countries as well as some large Asian cities and international tourist centres around the world. Trafficking in women and prostitution have by now become lucrative industries run by sophisticated crime syndicates that operate on an international scale (United Nations, 1997b, p. 48).

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[62] For instance, Indonesia aimed at sending 500,000 female migrants overseas within its 1989-1994 fifth five-year plan (United Nations, 1997a).

[63] Kalayaan and the Commission for Filipino Migrant Workers. For efforts to organize domestic workers, see box III.3.

Box III.3

Organizing among migrant domestic workers in Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China, Canada and Europe

While it is difficult to organize domestic workers, successful efforts have been made in several countries in the last couple of decades.

In Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China, migrant female domestic workers have organized themselves, forming the Asian Domestic Workers' Union (ADWU) in 1988. Today, the union has over 1,700 members who come from the Philippines, Thailand and other countries in South and South-East Asia. The organization is run by its own members.

A significant aspect of ADWU work involves assisting in labour grievances (maltreatment or underpayment), police cases (physical and/or sexual assault) and immigration concerns (illegal work, change of employment, overstay). Many cases have been handled with largely positive results. In addition, the union offers telephone counselling for workers having problems.

Another example of migrant women's organizing focused on the struggle for the right to remain in Canada, where domestic workers were allowed to stay in the country for only three years on temporary permits. The International Coalition to End Domestics' Exploitation (Intercede) had begun in 1979 as a coalition of community groups for workers' rights and became a multiracial organization of domestic workers. Through pressure from Intercede in 1981, the Canadian Government allowed domestic workers the right to apply for "landed status" after two years of work in the country.

Finally, in Europe several steps have been taken in organizing for migrant women. A conference was held in 1992 at Barcelona, entitled "Empowering Filipinas in Europe". Also, some unions in Europe affiliated to the International Union of Food and Allied Workers' Association have domestic workers as members. This includes the Austrian Agricultural, Food Processing and Catering Union, the German Union of Food Processing and Catering Workers (NGG) and the Italian Federation of Workers in Commerce, Tourism and Services/Italian General Confederation of Labour.

Source: Martens, 1994.

IV. Changing patterns of rural women's work

213. The agricultural sector in most developing countries is dualistic in nature: there is usually a well-developed commercial farming subsector made up of medium- and large-scale farms (most of which are owned by men or corporate structures) and family-run, small land holdings.

214. A small proportion of rural women find work on large farms and plantations, in agro-processing plants and small rural-based enterprises. In South and South-East Asia in particular, women supply a significant amount of the labour on plantations to produce tea, rubber, cacao, coconut and fruit. However, the great majority of women workers in rural areas of developing countries are self-employed. They can be classified in three main categories:

(a) "Co-farmers" or unpaid family workers on farms or small enterprises;

(b) Own-account farmers (who are mainly growing food for family consumption);

(c) Micro-scale, non-agricultural traders and artisans (working largely on a part-time basis).

215. In addition to their productive work, the traditional division of labour in most societies gives women the primary responsibility for such domestic chores as cleaning, cooking, childcare, care of the sick and the elderly, and fetching water and fuelwood. Adding this responsibility to the work that they do in farming, wage labour or income-generating activities, most women and men living in poverty are overburdened with work. Working days can be as long as 16 hours, with little time available for rest or recreation.

216. As box IV.1 shows, more than half of all women are still in agriculture in the developing world. In certain regions, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, South and West Asia, men are leaving agriculture faster than women, giving rise to an increasing relative concentration of women on land. For instance, in India 86 per cent of rural women workers are in agriculture compared with 74 per cent of rural male workers, and this gender gap is growing. In addition, a large percentage of households are headed by females (some 20 per cent in Bangladesh and India) (Agarwal, 1997a, p. 1376). In sub-Saharan Africa, the figure is about 30 per cent.

A. Counting rural women's work

217. The fact that rural women tend to wear several hats and juggle several activities at the same time leads to difficulty in defining and measuring the work that they do. Official statistics and surveys still tend to count only paid work or ask what is the principal work of a person. In the course of one day, rural women may work on the family plot, tend livestock, fish, gather fuelwood, transport and market food, process food, weave cloth, make handicrafts, among other tasks, and therefore may not be able to answer such a cut-and-dried question. They may have worked as wage labour during the peak agricultural season, but failed to report that because the survey or census was undertaken in the off-peak period. Problems in defining and measuring rural women's work can arise from official definitions and information-gathering procedures, which may be inadequate in assessing the value and nature of non-wage, informal economic activities and of real levels of employment and activity (FAO, 1996b; United Nations, 1995).

218. Changes in data collection methods to include enumeration of self-employed agriculturists are beginning to give recognition to women's productive work. Estimates of

Box IV.1
Women's participation in agriculture

The following summary of the available statistics on women's participation in agriculture was prepared by FAO. Available statistics on women's participation in agriculture in most cases understate the case. The actual figures related to the role that women play in producing food crops is thought to be more striking than this summary.

Sub-Saharan Africa: women contribute 60-80 per cent of labour in food production both for household consumption and for sale. Women's contributions to household food production range from 30 per cent in Sudan to 80 per cent in the Congo, while the proportion of women in the economically active labour force in agriculture ranges from 48 per cent in Burkina Faso to 73 per cent in the Congo (FAO, 1995c).

Asia: women account for approximately 50 per cent of food production overall in the region, with considerable variation by country. For example, women make up over 60 per cent of the agricultural labour force in Thailand, 54 per cent in Indonesia, approximately 46 per cent in Bangladesh, Nepal and the Philippines; and 35 per cent in Malaysia (FAO, 1996b; ESCAP, 1996a, f and h). In South-East Asia, women play a major role in rice production, generally providing the unpaid family or wage labour needed for sowing, transplanting, harvesting and processing (FAO, 1996b).

Pacific: women play a dominant role in fisheries and food marketing as well as in the labour-intensive processing of cash crops including palm oil, copra, coconut oil, vanilla, coffee and cocoa. In Papua New Guinea, where the population is overwhelmingly rural (87 per cent), women make up 71 per cent of the agricultural labour force. In Fiji, women account for 38 per cent of agricultural labour (FAO, 1996b).

Near East: existing methods of measurement, combined with the reluctance of males to acknowledge the economic activities of their wives and daughters outside the house, leads to under-reporting of women's participation in economic activities. Recent studies have shown that women's contributions to agriculture are significant when unpaid and seasonal labour is taken into account. Women account for 55.3 per cent of unpaid agricultural labour in Turkey, 53.2 per cent in Morocco, 50.7 per cent in Egypt, 40.7 per cent in Lebanon, 30.7 per cent in Iraq, and 28 per cent in Mauritania (FAO, 1996b).

Latin America and the Caribbean: official statistics underestimate women's contribution to agricultural production, as women are mainly engaged in unpaid labour on family farms. By including women's work in food production, a study revealed that women make up a substantial part of the rural labour force in the region (see fig. IV.1). Women are also increasingly employed in the production of non-traditional export crops.

Source: FAO, 1996b.

female labour force participation rates have risen as a result. A study carried out by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture-Inter-American Development Bank (IICA-IDB), for instance, demonstrated that official statistics in several Latin American countries ignored over a quarter of the farm workforce by not counting women's work in household food production (fig. IV.1).

B. Commercialization and market liberalization in agriculture

219. Agricultural development has increasingly become market oriented over the last two decades. Many developing countries have introduced economic liberalization policies in order to foster new kinds of growth. These policies have promoted the liberalization of trade and markets, and favoured large-scale commercial farming and export cash cropping over household subsistence production, assuming that productivity improvements were easier to obtain in the former (FAO, 1996b). Government-sponsored agricultural services, such as training and extension, as well as investment in rural infrastructure, have been scaled down in the name of promoting market relations (Alexandtratos, 1995).

220. The widespread, long-run benefits these policies were expected to have on growth and poverty reduction have failed to materialize.[64] The farmers who were already better off appear to have benefited while the overall impact on small farmers appears to have been quite negative and at times even self-defeating. For instance, with the reduction in public investment in rural infrastructure, small feeder roads that link rural areas to towns could no longer be maintained, and thus small farmers' physical access to markets was impaired. Likewise, reductions in government extension and training programmes lowered small farmers' capacity to benefit from new market opportunities through skill enhancement, again defeating the very objective of promoting market relations.

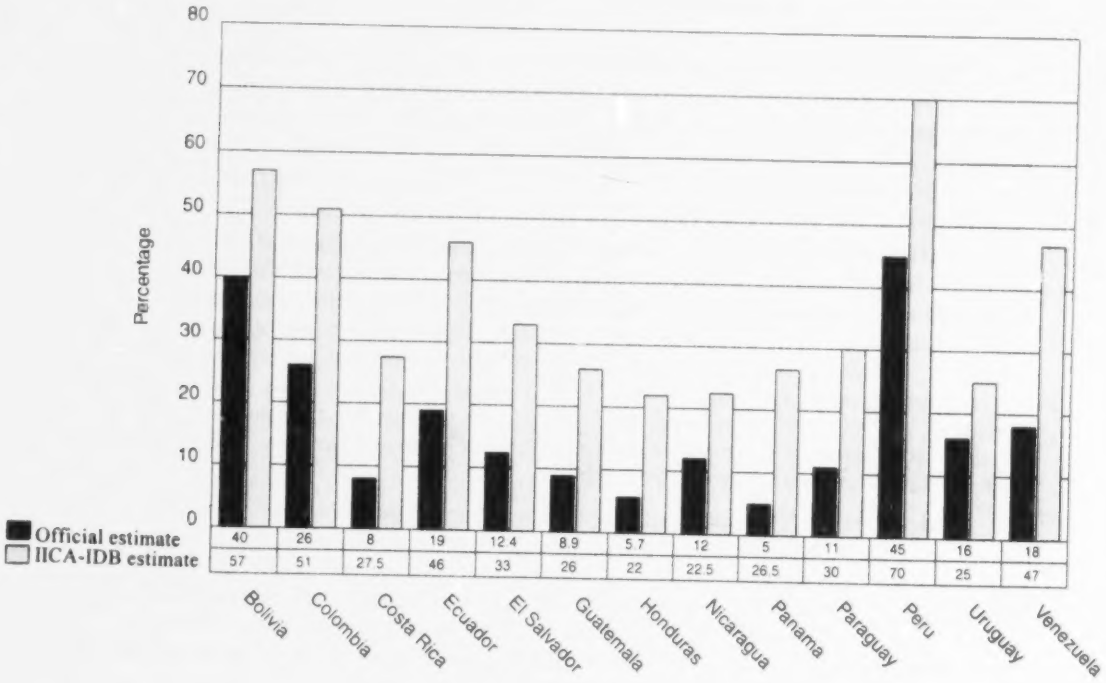
221. In general, women have been disproportionately affected by the negative effects of market liberalization. In relation to men, they have been ill-equipped both to shield themselves from its ill effects and to benefit from the opportunities it has created. Generally, they have control over or possession of fewer assets or property, little cash income, minimal political power and less education than men. Moreover, not always able to control the income from their labour, women also might have lacked the incentive to heed changing market signals (FAO, 1996b; Jazairy and others, 1992). Kenya provides an example of the difference that incentives can make. The same improved methods in maize production in Kenya raised yields by 56 per cent on plots controlled by women, but only by 15 per cent on plots where women worked but men controlled the revenue from the sale of crops (Elson, 1995).

222. The opening of local markets to cheaper imports and the removal of agricultural subsidies have in general led to loss of employment among small-scale farmers, who are more likely to have been women than men. These gender-differentiated displacement effects, and whether new employment opportunities created by market liberalization have sufficiently compensated them, are addressed in chapter II. Here, the discussion focuses on other gender effects which market-oriented development policies have had through their impact on the gender division of labour, property relations and household survival strategies.

[64] While the World Bank (1994) has stressed the positive effect of market liberalization on the growth of agricultural output, others in the literature point to its disastrous welfare effects on poor farmers (Cornia and others 1987; Commander, 1989; Duncan and Howell, 1992; Stewart, 1995). In a few cases, liberalization might have increased growth in output while reducing poverty (Baffes and Guatam, 1996).

Figure IV.1

Women as percentage of the rural labour force: official estimates vs. IICA-IDB estimates, selected countries, 1994



Source: FAO, 1996b.

1. Gender division of labour

223. The shift in production towards cash crops from household subsistence production is one of the defining characteristics of commercialization in agriculture. Links to the wider economy are established through the market, as a greater part of inputs are purchased, and most of the output is sold.

224. In many regions of sub-Saharan Africa, the introduction of cash crops has altered the gender division of labour and management of household resources. While women have generally continued to manage household food production (Tibaijuka, 1994), men's primary economic activity became cash crops. Women have been expected to contribute labour to cash crop production (especially in labour intensive operations), while taking over tasks that men customarily carried out before, such as land preparation and tilling.

225. For example, Ibo women in Nigeria traditionally have had primary responsibility for household food production. While they engage in planting, weeding, harvesting, animal husbandry and food processing, their menfolk are responsible for land preparation (Ezumah and Di Domenico, 1997). However, with men's increasing involvement in cash crops, non-farm activities and wage employment, the women have also become responsible for work that was previously done by men (Karl, 1997). Similarly, in Ghana, since men have customarily been responsible for clearing thick bush prior to planting, the diversion of their labour to other uses has led to longer cropping rotations because women are unable to perform this task with existing tools (FAO, 1996c).

226. In many areas of sub-Saharan Africa, men make up the majority of migrants to mines and cities in search of employment, leaving women farmers to take on male tasks in agriculture. Although female-headed households are increasing in almost all regions, the situation is most dramatic in sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean, where women head approximately 30 per cent of rural households. In female-headed households which face labour shortages, women organize labour exchanges with other women, work longer hours themselves, or if remittances and other income sources suffice, hire labour. But they may also adopt other coping strategies, such as reducing the area under cultivation, switching to less labour-intensive but less nutritious crops, both of which can compromise household food security (FAO, 1995a and 1996b; Heyzer, 1987; Jazairy and others, 1992; Karl, 1997).

227. In general, the reduction of household resources devoted to subsistence production has had the effect of diminishing food security even when total household income increased on account of cash crop production (Lado, 1992). This is because the income from cash crops, which men customarily control, is not generally pooled in the household, while women's income is mainly used for food and other basic necessities. That explains why an increase in cash income controlled by men does not necessarily translate into improved household nutritional intake and food security.[65]

228. The food security and welfare of farming households are also threatened with increasing reliance on production for the market. Farmers are increasingly vulnerable to failures in yields, with their growing dependence on markets for farm inputs and with the higher and more volatile price levels associated with market liberalization (Barrett, 1998).

229. Some countries have realized the importance of household subsistence production by women for food security and have taken measures to support it. Namibia, for example, has changed its policies in this regard. Prior to 1995, government resources were channelled

[65] By the same token, employment opportunities in commercial agriculture and agroindustries that have increased women's income have had beneficial effects on the health and well-being of the whole family (Collins, 1995; FAO, 1995a, 1995c, 1996b; FAO/RAPA, 1995; Jazairy et al, 1992; and Karl, 1995).

mainly into commercial ventures in communal areas, providing technical assistance, inputs and credit to farmers who were able to produce commercial crops such as cotton or livestock for the market. The main beneficiaries were the better-off farmers, mainly men (Girvan, 1995). The new National Agricultural Policy (NAP), approved by the Government in 1995, brought about major changes. In addition to acknowledging the important role of women in agriculture, the NAP targeted extension services to small- and medium-scale farmers, particularly in female-headed households (Namibia, 1995; Sontheimer, 1997).

230. In most other developing countries, agricultural policies that support market liberalization have in general continued to favour large farms, which are thought to have greater potential for achieving higher output. With fewer assets and less potential, small-scale and subsistence farmers have received less attention from policy makers, institutions and service providers, despite the fact that they usually make up the overwhelming majority of the rural population.

2. Privatization

231. Another trend widely associated with these market-oriented agricultural policies has been the drive towards privatization of land and other natural resources. In much of Africa, Western-styled private property regimes have been gaining ground at the expense of traditional land tenure systems (Lastarria-Cornhiel, 1997). By conferring formal ownership on land and water, privatization has in general strengthened the control of already powerful groups over these resources to the detriment of small-scale farmers, restricting particularly women's rights and access to resources (Lastarria-Cornhiel, 1997; Meer, 1997; Dey-Abbas 1992). Because land is collateral for credit and a means of access to other resources, services and processes of local decision-making, the gender differences in its ownership and control might be the single most important factor that explains the gap in economic well-being, social status and empowerment between men and women (Agarwal, 1995).

232. In many traditional farming systems, gender has been a basic factor in determining land tenure and rights of control and access to land. For instance, in much of Africa, women rarely own or have authority to dispose of the land they control and farm in subsistence production. However, their right of access to land is recognized in the customary system, though these rights might not always be well-defined or equal to those of men (Lastarria-Cornhiel, 1997). By contrast, in South Asia, agricultural land is already largely owned by individuals. Women are not formally barred from owning land and property, but they are often de facto discriminated against comparing to men in terms of inheritance rights, especially in countries where customary restrictions prevail. Moreover, they often cede inherited property to male kin to ensure continued male support and protection (Agarwal, 1994).

233. In some countries, the rights women have under formal legislation can be inferior to those they enjoy under customary practices. In others, the situation might be the reverse. Legislation might affirm women's basic rights to property, but customary practice can limit its application (FAO, 1996d). In the Asian context, changes in tenure arrangements are mostly taking place in the management of common pasture lands and national forest reserves. Resource management is increasingly being devolved to the local level under community management arrangements.[66] In principle, women should be able to benefit, but

[66] However, in parts of South-East Asia, arrangements for access to tracts of tropical forest are being reversed: removing customary rights enjoyed by farmers and the community, Governments are granting exclusive exploitation rights under licence to large-scale commercial loggers.

this is commonly not the case because they are usually marginalized in the new community management structures (Guijt and Shah, 1998; Agarwal, 1997a; Sarin, 1995).

234. Likewise, in the State-led land-reform schemes, which peaked during the 1960s and 1970s, women were mainly overlooked. Because those programmes granted titles to household heads who were presumed to be men, they tended to have a strong male bias.[67] In contrast, women appear to have fared better under the more recent schemes that gave joint titles to both spouses, or made attempts to individually target women, in some parts of South Asia (Agarwal, 1994) and Latin America (Deere and León, 1997). In Colombia, for instance, top priority is now given in land distribution programmes to women who are heads of household or considered vulnerable by other criteria; for instance, those displaced by war.

235. During the 1990s, the general trend has been to move away from State-led land reforms towards greater reliance on market mechanisms. Many countries have promoted private ownership of land, in the belief that a secure and well-defined land tenure is imperative for the responsiveness of small farmers to market incentives. Without a clear and secure title, it was thought, a farmer would have no incentive to improve the productivity of land. However, in recent years this view has been widely criticized (Sjaastad and Bromley, 1997; Besley, 1995). The inefficiencies generally attributed to traditional land tenure systems are found not only to be exaggerated, but also to some extent common to the market system based on individual private ownership (Dujon, 1997). In a similar vein, in parts of India, community resource management might have proved more effective in preventing natural resource degradation than has been the case under private or State ownership (Agarwal, 1997b).

236. It is also argued that if their rights over land are not secure, women might have a perverse incentive not to invest in it since improving its productivity can possibly lead to their loss of control over it. Indeed, there are cases in sub-Saharan Africa, where men have taken control of the harvest in plots of land previously managed by women, in which the introduction of irrigation has led to a marked improvement in returns to labour in relation to rainfed crops. Some studies from the Gambia show that women have lost well-established use and ownership rights to rice land when it was developed for irrigation, even though their names were in the tenancy titles issued by the Government. As a result, rice is no longer a crop under female management but a household crop under the control of the male household head. Men have also gained greater command over female labour, as women have been obliged to work on male-controlled crops, rather than in their own fields (Dey-Abbas, 1992). Likewise, some studies from Asia show that mechanization, introduced as part of irrigation schemes, has resulted in changing work patterns in farming, often replacing female labour with male labour (FAO, 1996c). In a similar vein, the majority of small farmers, particularly women food producers, have not generally benefited from the introduction of high-yielding crop varieties, either because they could not afford the required external inputs, such as fertilizers and pesticides, or because their position was marginalized when high-yielding crops were successfully cultivated (FAO, 1996e).

237. Although land markets are in theory open to everyone, rural people in poverty — both men and women — are unable to take advantage of the market system because they lack three essentials: (a) information about new laws and programmes; (b) money to purchase land; and (c) access to credit. Women might be at a particular disadvantage, however, not because they are formally cut off from markets but because in relation to men they are less

[67] For instance, in the Latin American land reforms, women fared quite poorly, with direct female beneficiaries ranging from almost none in Chile to 15 per cent in Mexico. As with land reform, many government-led irrigation schemes also had a strong male bias (Zwarteveen, 1995; NEDA, 1997).

likely to have sufficient access to credit, political connections and knowledge about public institutions. The traditional expectations about their role and place in society can be a serious impediment. Women who are able to accumulate enough money to buy land are usually employed urban women or women in peri-urban areas who grow food for the urban market (Lastarria-Cornhiel, 1997). Thus, the limited but socially recognized land rights women enjoy under the customary tenure systems are in danger of being lost during the transition to a market-based tenure system. Whether this transition occurs through land reform or market forces, men tend to acquire total legal ownership of land as heads of households, and women tend to become marginalized. However, as the above example from Gambia shows, women's customary rights over land can also be abrogated under the traditional land tenure system as economic conditions change.

238. The African National Congress (ANC)-led South African Government has tried to address some of those problems by giving priority to the poor, especially women, in the country's land reform programme. The land distribution component of the programme, which provided women and men from poor households with a grant to purchase land from willing sellers, has tried to advance women's access to land.[68] The South African programme has also been instructive in showing that Governments can play a crucial role in market-based land reforms, by addressing inequities which involve both racial and gender-based discrimination (Meer, 1997). Along similar lines, two recent studies — one looking at land reform in Central America, the other in Latin America as a whole — suggest that land titling and privatization can potentially benefit women more than State-led land redistribution by providing new options to rural people to acquire land, either through purchase or legal claim (Deere and León, 1997; Galan, 1998).[69]

239. There have also been other innovative efforts at the level of NGOs to use the market system to benefit poor women. One interesting example is that of the Deccan Development Society (DDS), which is an NGO working with landless women's collectives in Andhra Pradesh in South India. DDS has helped poor village women use various government poverty-alleviation schemes to acquire land through purchase or lease. The purchased land is usually divided into individual plots among the group members, each registered individually as an independent owner but cultivated collectively (Agarwal, 1997b). In the process, women engage in a diverse set of activities ranging from marketing produce to dealing with government officials and hiring tractors and other equipment. Similar examples, where women act jointly in the market to overcome disadvantages they individually face, can also be found in other parts of India and in Bangladesh (Agarwal, 1997b).

C. Responses to market economy at the household level

1. Entrepreneurial activity

240. Development agencies are increasingly promoting microenterprises for rural women in food processing and other agroindustries as a market-friendly way of alleviating rural

[68] However, more effort might be required by both the Government and the non-governmental organizations to ensure that women benefit from land reform. It has been argued that the grants provided are meagre in relation to land prices (Meer, 1997).

[69] However, both studies stress that beyond gender-aware legislative changes, much work still needs to be done to remove remaining legal barriers in civil and family law which discriminate against women, to sensitize bureaucrats to recognize women's rights, share information with women so that they are aware of their own rights, and provide them with assistance to support their claims to land under redistribution programmes. Moreover, those who receive grants to purchase land need to be able to access such services as credit and extension to be able to develop their land and make a decent living as farmers.

poverty, addressing gender inequality and jump starting economic growth in poor agrarian economies. Ongoing economic changes associated with market-oriented policies and globalization have opened up new opportunities of entrepreneurial activity for rural women. However, before women can take advantage of such opportunities, the constraints they face in accessing inputs, markets, skill training and credit must be overcome.

241. Over the last two decades, a rural bank in Bangladesh (Grameen Bank)[70] has pioneered a microcredit scheme particularly designed to support small enterprises set up by rural women in poverty (Yunus, 1997). In order to receive credit, women have been encouraged to attend an introductory training session and organize themselves into groups that met regularly. Active in more than half of all the villages in the country, Grameen Bank now has more than two million members, of which 90 per cent are women. Attracting wide international acclaim, the Bank's successes — repayment rates have been exceedingly high — have deeply influenced the way economic development is thought about around the world. Currently, microcredit and credit delivery schemes have become the central pillars of development projects of most bilateral and multilateral development agencies, private voluntary organizations and many NGOs.

242. Various studies have documented the empowering effects of Grameen Bank's microcredit programmes on rural women. One study of six villages (Hashemi and others, 1996) found that women participating in the programmes enhanced their mobility and economic security, and increased their involvement in major household decisions and ability to make purchases on their own. Using the data of that study, a subsequent study found that women's access to credit augmented the use of contraception as well (Schuler and others, 1997). However, on the negative side, the donor and international development community's disposition to reward financial success above all else, might have given rise to Bank practices which sacrificed women's well-being when it came into conflict with financial sustainability. It is reported that "bank workers and peer group members inflict an intense pressure on borrowers for timely repayment, rather than working to raise collective responsibility and borrower empowerment as originally envisaged by the bank" (Rahman, 1999).

243. Many other recent studies from around the world encourage a more cautious (even sceptical) view about the role of microenterprises (and by extension microcredit) in development.[71] Examining the effects of microfinance programmes in three African countries (Ghana, Kenya, Malawi), one study found no "significant" or "sustained" impact on its beneficiaries, and counselled caution against the current "donor fascination" with microfinance, which can divert attention from other essential and possibly more pertinent interventions (Buckley, 1997). Another recent study in Kenya found that of the 15 per cent of rural microenterprises which are the sole source of household sustenance, none generated a level of income that exceeded the absolute poverty line, as defined by the World Bank.[72] Whether or not these microenterprises had access to microcredit had no statistically significant impact on the level of income they could earn (Daniels, 1999). More surprisingly, whether they were owned by women or men has also made little, if any, difference in their performance. In another study from the Dominican Republic, the difference of ownership by sex was found to be important. In microenterprises they owned, women worked longer

[70] Also active among rural women in poverty has been another bank in Bangladesh, Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), which adopted methods similar to those of Grameen Bank.

[71] For a comparative analysis of different microfinance programmes from around the world, see Hulme and Mosley, 1996.

[72] The World Bank defines the absolute poverty line as the minimum level of expenditure deemed necessary to satisfy a person's food requirement plus the consumption of a few non-food necessities.

hours for less remuneration compared to men. Women's enterprises were also more embedded within the family, relying as they did on family networks for labour and credit.[73] The study also found that the vast majority of microenterprises, whether owned by women or men, were used more as a means of survival than as an instrument of empowering entrepreneurial activity (Cottam, 1993).

2. Restructuring household division of labour

244. In many regions of the developing world, poor smallholders on land are responding to market liberalization by restructuring their main resource, which is often just the household labour at their disposal. Although the actual adaptive patterns can vary markedly across the globe, the underlying principle seems quite similar. Rural households are trying to cope with the uncertainties of the market economy in the absence of an efficient formal/legal institutional structure that can assist them in adjusting to changing economic conditions. In order to minimize income insecurity, they try to diversify their resource base, which often simply means restructuring the household (gender) division of labour. Because permanent migration has become less of an option in recent years, some members of the household remain on the land while others seek temporary work elsewhere, leading to what has been conceptualized as "pluriactivity"[74] (Le Heron, 1991) or "land-based, free-floating labour"[75] (Ertürk, 1998).

245. Women are particularly overburdened with the care of young children, domestic chores and household production activities during their youth. Their domestic work is essential and irreplaceable, which is not the case with male labour (Tully, 1990). Men might have greater flexibility in shifting their work performance and schedules according to available work opportunities than do women. To the extent that women lack the same degree of mobility in relation with men, their labour has a lower opportunity cost and they more readily engage in labour-intensive tasks that have meagre returns. As a result, in many regions, women take on increasing workloads of low-productivity typically male tasks in agriculture, as men search for work off the farm with higher remuneration. Children, in the initial years of family formation, are a cost to the household. In later years, they become an asset which offers flexibility in allocating and organizing labour, thereby improving levels of household security (Ertürk, 1994).

246. For instance, in the Middle East, men engage in construction work (or other forms of wage labour) in the cities, while women, who are less mobile for cultural reasons, engage in wage work in and around the village. Likewise, in sub-Saharan Africa, men still tend to make up the majority of migrants to mines and cities in search of employment. Men often keep active ties with their farm back home, occasionally returning to help during the harvest and other periods of peak demand.

247. However, this pattern of gender division of labour has been changing in some regions, where export-led industrialization has created a strong demand for female labour. In recent years, in East Asia and in certain parts of Latin America, women have tended to comprise

[73] In all microcredit programmes around the world, women's ability to retain control over loans they receive is a major concern (Goetz and Sen Gupta, 1996).

[74] Le Heron (1991) has used "pluriactivity" to describe the multiple job options pursued by farm families. He observes that the level of pluriactivity in New Zealand initially rose in response to pressures on farm incomes since 1985, and has continued even after such pressures diminished.

[75] This concept is used to indicate the institutionalization of a labour-supply structure, particularly in countries where a large portion of the population is still engaged in agriculture. The concept differs from the conventional land-dependent labour force of pre-capitalist relations as well as from the free labour associated with capitalism.

the majority of labour migrants. In these regions, it is more likely that men remain on land while women migrate for cash earnings. Rural women, especially unmarried girls, have been migrating to work in factories, free trade zones, and agro-export enterprises to help their families survive in the face of increased poverty and income insecurity. In a study of Sri Lanka, for example, 60 per cent of female workers in the free trade zone came from landless rural families of casual agricultural labourers and 20 per cent belonged to subsistence farmer families. They migrated because of the extreme poverty of their families and because they had no employment options where they came from except casual agricultural labour and selling food (Goonatilake and Goonesekere, 1988). In addition to finding labour-intensive assembly work in export processing zones, women have in increasing numbers been migrating to work as domestic or entertainment workers[76] (Ghosh, 1998; United Nations, 1995, 1996b).

248. However, just like their male counterparts, most of the women migrants usually lack permanent migration as an option. While increasing unemployment, poverty and congestion in large cities within national borders have made permanent migration to urban centres less feasible, restrictions on the international movement of labour have increased considerably since the 1960s and 1970s. Thus, paradoxically, in the age of globalization, labour mobility across national borders has not been increasing at a rate comparable to the increased mobility of capital. Opportunities for permanent migration have become scarce just at a time when market liberalization in agriculture has been increasing the pressure to leave the land. With the diminishing prospect of permanent labour migration in much of the rural developing world, seasonal/temporary labour movements have become the mode of survival for many households. Remittances from family members in temporary/seasonal migration have made even the marginal production units on land viable, and enabled rural households to maintain themselves as independent small holders. By making many small and marginal production units on land sustainable, this process also had the effect of blurring the distinction between the rural and urban labour force (Ertürk, 1998).

3. Organization

249. Participation in rural organizations can be a means for rural men and women to strengthen their positions in an environment increasingly characterized by market forces. However, conventional forms of labour organization, such as trade unions, might not be the best instruments for protecting the rights of rural women workers. On the one hand, part of the problem might lie in the difficulty of organizing workers in rural areas, because of the dispersed and isolated nature of workplaces and the combination of own account, unpaid family and wage labour. Such difficulties are likely to be exacerbated by low levels of female literacy, women's lack of time for organizing, and traditional value systems and power structures that exclude female participation in public life (Bullock, 1994). On the other hand, another part of the problem might involve a male bias in the organizational framework of trade unions. As male-dominated political hierarchies, they might be reluctant to recognize women as farmers in their own right and discourage their participation. Where women do participate in these organizations, they are rarely present in leadership positions (Bullock, 1994; Heyzer, 1987).

250. According to a study on female plantation workers in Sri Lanka, even though trade union activity helped to eradicate wage discrepancies between male and female workers, women members felt that their pleas for better access to schooling, improved health care and sanitary conditions received low priority in union demands to plantation management

[76] See also chap. III.C.

boards (Samarasinghe, 1993). Although the international trade unions in the agricultural sector are strongly committed to issues of gender equality and have formulated proactive policies, there is still a problem of translating policy into action among front-line union leaders operating at the national and local level (FAO, 1995b).

251. However, in another example from Nicaragua, rural trade unions appear to have been receptive to increasingly outspoken and active participation by women workers, who made up close to half of the membership. For example, when instigated by its women workers, the Agricultural Workers Union (ATC) made paid maternity leave, laundry and childcare services a priority in union contract negotiations. By the end of the 1980s, with 35 per cent of its leadership positions held by women, ATC also built 108 rural childcare centres using resources from both local employers and international organizations (Perez-Aleman, 1992).

252. Rural workers' organizations (RWOs)[77] are another potentially effective way of empowering rural women. These are a type of trade union working at the local level and aiming to improve the living conditions of their members. Membership in such organizations includes not only wage earners and agricultural labourers but also self-employed marginal farmers and entrepreneurs. RWOs are important because they are often the only means of reaching out to marginal workers. While RWO membership differs widely between countries, it represents an estimated 7 to 15 per cent of the working population in agriculture, forestry and fisheries worldwide, 25 to 40 per cent of which is female. RWOs (a) assist their members in improving land tenure and working conditions through pressure for better legislation and bargaining; (b) provide their own agricultural support services or pressure to obtain such services from the Government or development agencies; and (c) support the development of income-generating activities through small-scale economic ventures (Bullock, 1994; FAO, 1994).

253. However, rural women might be reluctant to organize if that would be likely to cost them their jobs. Organizing for better working conditions can rob them of their "comparative advantage", which businesses sought in hiring cheap female labour. Businesses can simply move to other areas where workers are not protected, taking the jobs with them. Given women's reliance on and seeming preference for non-agricultural wage labour, organizing for women workers in these situations may be a double-edged sword (Sachs,1996).

254. As discussed earlier in greater detail, there has also been a strong trend in development projects and programmes to help women organize themselves in solidarity groups, such as community-based savings clubs, self-help organizations and work exchange groups, among others. Membership in such organizations has helped individual women to combine efforts and pool savings to improve their economic situation and to enhance their power through greater participation in development and decision-making processes.

[77] Rural workers' organizations have a mandate to defend the interests of all categories of rural workers who are defined by ILO Recommendation 149 as any person engaged in agriculture, handicrafts or related occupations in a rural area, whether as a wage earner or a self-employed person.

V. Transformation of the public policy environment

255. The benefits of portfolio investment in an economy can be substantial under the right conditions. When capital inflows are used to finance productive business spending, they stimulate economic growth and can therefore benefit both women and men in terms of employment and wages. The presence of supportive institutions is, however, required in order to ensure economic stability and sustained economic growth. Unfortunately, because capital flows under current institutional arrangements are often very volatile, their positive impact cannot be taken for granted.

256. Characterized by unregulated financial flows, the international economic environment tends to reduce, on the one hand, economic stability, and on the other, the ability of countries to deploy counter-cyclical policies to fight recessions. Such trends tend to affect women disproportionately because recessions hit them harder, for two reasons. First, in the formal sector, women tend to lose their jobs faster than men, and usually have lower unemployment and social security benefits. Second, compared to men they assume greater responsibilities in cushioning their families from the negative effects of recession. They work harder at home, spend more time shopping for bargains, and provide more work as caregivers.

257. Even in the absence of recessions, especially in developing countries, the need for the welfare role of the family (and thus the demands placed on unpaid female labour) appears to have increased with greater integration into the world economy, for the following reasons. First, with few exceptions, increased income inequality has led to rising poverty rates in most regions of the world since the 1980s.[78] Second, the labour market has become more volatile because of the higher level of intersectoral flows of labour caused by adjustment to world markets on the one hand, and the higher turnover rate of labour brought about by the growth of irregular forms of employment on the other. Third, for reasons again tied in part to globalization, in most countries the state's ability to mobilize resources for redistributive purposes appears to have diminished, leading to a decline in social spending on housing, nutrition, health and education on a per capita basis. Thus, with the family as the provider of last resort, a gap in social protection appears to have been a salient aspect of increased openness to the world economy.

258. The rest of the chapter takes a gender point of view to focus on certain aspects of globalization that effectively (a) constrain macroeconomic policy, (b) increase volatility and economic instability, and (c) reduce the ability of the State to raise resources for distributive purposes, creating a gap in social protection.

A. Deflationary bias in macroeconomic policy

259. Financial liberalization tends to amplify the ups and downs of business cycles in countries that receive capital flows. Capital flows in when the economy is performing well, making it grow even faster, but quickly exits when macroeconomic indicators show any sign of deterioration, exacerbating the economic downturn. At the same time, the dependence on financial capital flows constrains a country's ability to deploy counter-cyclical policies to fight recessions and counteract the effects of financial crises on the real economy (ILO, 1999). In order to gain the confidence of financial markets (and thus to minimize the risk of abrupt reversals of capital flows), Governments keep fiscal deficits under control by

[78] For recent trends on poverty since the 1980s, see UNDP (1998, 1997), ILO (1996c) and Berry and Stewart (1996).

curtailing their spending and maintaining high interest rates. These measures in turn tend to have a *deflationary* bias, as they have the effect of keeping employment and output growth below their potential.

260. Governments may or may not be fully aware of the costs that offset the benefits of attracting capital flows, but the changed global environment nevertheless propels them to adopt policies to attract capital. The overarching need for financial resources can thus induce Governments to adopt macroeconomic policies that can come into conflict with some development goals.

261. What policies might Governments adopt to influence the inflow of financial capital? Capital flows in search of profits around the world are, in practice, attracted to two primary conditions: high interest and low inflation rates. Those conditions signal to investors that they can anticipate a high rate of return on their financial investment. High interest rates attract capital for obvious reasons: they are indicative of the rate of return on financial investment. Low inflation, in turn, ensures that the real value of the financial investment does not erode over time. Each of those conditions sets the parameters around government monetary policy in countries that are trying to attract capital.

262. The imperative of maintaining high interest rates has generally been observed by Governments. In the effort to establish "credibility" with financial markets, they have ratcheted up interest rates globally in order to stabilize capital flows. The evidence indicates that interest rates in the 1990s have been at an historic high around the world (Eatwell, 1996).

263. Because fiscal deficits are believed to be inflationary, and incur the displeasure of financial markets, investors may also expect Governments to adopt contractionary fiscal policies. Tight monetary policies in turn serve to dampen inflationary tendencies in an economy, holding down prices and protecting the real value of investments. Together, the requisite tight money policies and fiscal restraint necessary to attract global capital have effects that are potentially contradictory to those caused by capital flows. While the latter stimulate growth, the former dampen aggregate demand and thus tend to slow growth.

264. Evidence suggests that the effects of deflationary bias might be dominating the positive effects of capital flows. Data on investment rates over the period of financial liberalization indicate that the predominant tendency over the past 20 years has been for investment as a share of GDP to fall. Moreover, declines have been more pronounced in most regions in the late 1980s as capital liberalization has become more widespread. For example, three quarters of OECD countries had lower investment/GDP ratios in the 1980s than in the 1960s, as did 9 out of 10 Latin American countries. Only in East and South-East Asia had there been a persistent pattern of higher rates of investment in the 1980s (Felix, 1995). Similarly, the dominant tendency again has been for growth rates of GDP per capita to fall from the 1980s to the present, relative to the 1960s and 1970s. This trend is obvious in all regions, including in East and South-East Asia, despite the increasing trend in its investment/GDP ratio. Thus, one of the important impacts of recent trends in financial liberalization has been, on balance, slower rates of investment and growth. This is primarily due to the types of macroeconomic policies Governments are required to adopt in order to attract and retain capital flows.

1. Gender effects of economic stagnation

265. The evidence from diverse regions of the world suggests recessions, economic stagnation and slow growth have more negative effects on women's employment than men's. For instance, in the European Union, increased unemployment caused by slow growth

appears to have affected women more. In Central Europe, women's labour-force participation rates and employment have declined absolutely and relative to men's over the period 1985-1997. In Hungary, women's employment fell by 40 per cent, while men's fell by 30 per cent. Likewise, in the Russian Federation, female employment fell by 21 per cent over this period as compared with a 6 per cent decline for men.

266. In the United States of America where slow growth has resulted in a downward pressure on wages as opposed to unemployment, the gender effects have differed. Because increases in the minimum wage have not kept pace with inflation, its value in real terms has fallen below what it was in 1969. The falling wage floor has affected women more than men because they disproportionately hold minimum-wage and near-minimum-wage jobs. This finding does not contradict the narrowing of the gender wage gap discussed in chapter II, since the closure of the gap is largely the result of downward pressure on male wages, but it implies that income polarization among women has increased.

267. In many developing economies, the combined processes of slow growth, coupled with growing cost competition discussed in chapter III, have led to decreasing formal sector employment. In these settings, there has been a tendency for women's employment in the formal sector to diminish in relation to men's, from early in the 1990s (Standing, 1997). In recent years, the spread of more flexible and informal employment accounts for much of the upward trend in the female share of the labour force. The upward trend in self-employment (indicative of informal sector work) is particularly notable in Latin America, where growth has been slow in recent years.

2. Gender biases in social security systems

268. The increasing involvement of women in irregular forms of employment has left women vulnerable in terms of job security and social protection. This is in part due to gender inequalities in access to social security systems, which can be more damaging for women today than in the past.

269. In industrialized countries, the traditional pattern of social security has been based on the traditional concept of a woman as a dependent spouse, and women's earnings were regarded as supplementary income for the family. A number of countries have taken steps to adapt their social security legislation to the new realities created by the increased participation of women in paid employment and changing family structures, including the rise of female-headed households and dual income households, but significant gender inequalities still remain. Direct and indirect forms of gender discrimination are the main sources of these inequalities, and are rooted in coverage of benefits and social insurance.

270. Even if discriminatory practices in programme design are eliminated, women would still be in a disadvantaged position in terms of social protection, as long as social security benefits are tied to labour-market employment where pervasive gender inequalities persist. Women in paid employment have acquired independent rights to social security coverage in respect of most contingencies, including pension rights and entitlements, health-care coverage, entitlement to unemployment compensation and protection against occupational accidents. But for women, benefits associated with those rights are considerably lower than those enjoyed by men, because they are linked to work and as we have seen, women's pay is on average lower and access to jobs, especially good jobs, is more limited for them compared to men. Thus, whatever factor disadvantages women in paid employment will also adversely affect their social security benefits.

271. In the United States of America, for example, where women are also more likely to work at irregular or part-time jobs, many are not eligible for unemployment insurance should

they lose their jobs since the system is largely designed for full-time year round workers. As a result, women heads of households who lose their irregular jobs have frequently had to rely on the welfare system as an unemployment insurance programme by default. The dismemberment of that programme in 1995, however, has put many more women and children at risk of poverty.

272. In developing countries, where social security schemes were modelled upon the early European systems and implemented only on the basis of paid employment, coverage is restricted to salaried workers, and even then full coverage (for both men and women) is limited. Thus, only a small fraction of workers enjoy social security benefits. Finally, in some countries, as a result of the high percentage of male migration to the urban centres or the transfer of the male workforce to employment off the farm, women are increasingly taking on the agricultural work abandoned by men. In addition to their low income, these women in general lack coverage in a social security scheme.

273. In transition economies, economic liberalization has undermined the previous system of social protection, under which women benefited from favourable treatment on issues related to maternity and child care. The labour market and households are adjusting to an era of greatly reduced levels of State family support. Women have been most severely and immediately hit by these *cuts in non-wage labour income*, given that women bear prime responsibility for the social reproduction in the form of childcare and household maintenance.

B. Increased risk and volatility

274. One of the hallmarks of globalization is the rapidity with which capital flows respond to changing economic conditions. This characteristic is most notable in financial markets. The elimination of rules restricting the movement of capital now allows investors to respond almost instantaneously to differences in expected profitability across borders. It is this feature of deregulated financial markets that causes increased volatility, generating costs that potentially offset the benefits associated with capital mobility.

275. The risks that a country incurs by permitting free entry and exit of international flows of capital come from the impact of a sudden reversal of inflows. In the recent past, the world has experienced a number of financial crises in which large increases in capital inflows were eventually reversed with equally large and rapid outflows. It is frequently the case that inflows themselves contribute to the eventual reversal through their effect on macroeconomic conditions. A familiar sequence of events unfolds as follows. Large capital inflows lead to a rapid expansion in bank credit, leading to a subsequent increase in economic activity which eventually tends to spur inflation. As a result, domestic currencies become overvalued. This causes exports to decline and imports to rise, giving rise to a trade imbalance. Foreign investors then begin to expect a currency devaluation and their eventual reaction to the weak macroeconomic "fundamentals" — rising inflation, trade deficits and overvalued currency — precipitates capital flight.

1. A case study in volatility: the Asian financial crisis

276. Events in Asia, a region that had been praised for its openness to trade, investment and financial flows, point to the risks of volatility in capital flows. It shows that while access to global capital may generate some benefits, the costs to domestic economies can also be enormous.

277. The growth record of Asian economies over the last two decades and longer is well known. Economic expansion in recent years followed on the heels of a wave of Japanese foreign direct investment (FDI) in the mid-1980s. Optimism that the Asian economies would continue to grow at a rapid pace was exhibited by the rush of foreign capital into this region over the last several years. Much of the capital inflow was in the form of short-term rather than long-term loans or the more stable FDI.

278. There are divergent views on what had led to the financial panic that first surfaced in Thailand in May 1997. Large capital inflows had led to inflation, appreciation of domestic currencies, and ultimately to trade imbalances. Some argue that the weak banking system had funnelled foreign funds to unprofitable investments. Others claim the capital inflows had been too rapid to be productively absorbed, as evidenced by the high level of speculative investments in real estate.

279. Whatever the causes, with the beginning of bank failures in Thailand in May 1997, foreign banks and investors quickly lost confidence and sold off their financial assets, causing the value of the Thai currency and asset prices to fall precipitously. Investors were also driven to review their portfolios in other countries in the region, and began to question borrowers' ability to pay off loans. The resulting financial stampede from Asia amounted to almost $100 billion exiting this region during the latter part of 1997 (Griffith-Jones, 1998). Thailand was particularly severely hit. While net capital inflows in 1995 amounted to 12.7 per cent of GDP in Thailand, the capital outflows resulting from financial panic were almost 10.7 per cent of GDP. There is widespread agreement that financial markets severely overreacted to economic conditions in Asia, and that this overreaction has had profoundly negative economic and social effects on the region.

280. The three hardest hit economies — Indonesia, Thailand and the Republic of Korea — experienced particularly sharp contractions of output in the wake of the crisis, and as a result, precipitous declines in employment. In Indonesia, for example, output fell over 15 per cent in 1998. Unemployment rates doubled in that country from 5 per cent in 1996 to 10 per cent in 1998. In Thailand unemployment was expected to rise from 1.5 per cent to 5.6 per cent during the same period, while in the Republic of Korea employment losses caused the official unemployment rate to quadruple to 8 per cent (Bank of Korea, 1999).

281. Due to inflation resulting from devaluation and the rise in unemployment, real wages have also fallen dramatically. Reliable data on Indonesia and Thailand are not yet available; however, wage reductions have reportedly been substantial. Coupled with rising inflation, decreases in wages mean that real wages in those countries have declined sharply. Deterioration in Indonesia has been particularly wrenching, where the purchasing power of low-income groups has precipitously declined. It is estimated that the number of people in poverty in that country has risen from 22 to 100 million, or 48 per cent of the population. The poverty rate is expected to rise further in 1999, up to 66 per cent, if economic conditions do not improve (UNCTAD, 1999). In the Republic of Korea, on average, real earnings fell 5.5 per cent from the end of 1997 to October 1998 (Bank of Korea, 1999).

282. The effects of the Asian crisis have spilled over to the rest of the world to varying degrees. For instance, after the onset of the Asian crisis, South African exchange rates came under speculative attack, despite good macroeconomic "fundamentals". While the causes of the attack are unclear, except for increased hypersensitivity of financial markets to perceptions of risk, authorities were forced to respond to the speculative attack and capital outflows by raising interest rates. Because this took place at a time of high unemployment and slow growth, the performance of the South African economy deteriorated further (UNCTAD, 1999).

2. The gender effects of the Asian crisis

283. The adverse effects of the crisis on women are amplified because of the gender inequalities in labour markets and in the household. Within labour markets in the region, women have in general been first to be fired after the outbreak of the crisis, mainly for two reasons. First, the sectors and firms where women are concentrated were harder hit by the crisis. Many of the small establishments in the export sector, where women are employed in large numbers, have proven more vulnerable and gone bankrupt in the early days of the crisis. Second, even in large firms, women have been the first fired, reflecting an effort to protect the jobs of male "breadwinners". Women's jobs were not considered as important as men's, and thus were more dispensable.

284. For Indonesia and Thailand, there are still few systematic data to permit a sex-disaggregated analysis of dismissal trends. But NGOs and women's sections of trade unions report anecdotally that women have been fired in greater numbers than men (ILO, 1998). In Korea, women have lost jobs at twice the rate of men, despite the fact that before the crisis, they had been the preferred labour supply, with an unemployment rate half that of men (Wiltrout, 1998).

285. As discussed above, the social security systems in many developing economies are rudimentary and generally apply only to regular workers. Thus, to a larger extent than men, women are outside the coverage of these systems. Moreover, in Indonesia and Thailand, social security schemes have focused on job creation or income-generation activities rather than a social safety net approach. Even in the Republic of Korea, which is one of the few countries in the Asia region to have an unemployment insurance system, many women are not covered since the legislation only covers firms with five or more workers. Part-time workers, and those who have been with their employer less than 10 years, have been excluded. Because of this limited coverage, 40 per cent of workers remains uncovered, and they are primarily women, who are more likely to be concentrated in small firms (Ranis and Steward, 1998; Lee and Rhee, 1999). Those figures do not include the large number of women who are in the informal sector or involved in home-based work.

286. It appears that the reduction in formal sector employment has pushed more people into informal sector employment. Moreover, many women who were not formally employed before the crisis have begun seeking informal sector work, to compensate for the fall in family income when husbands or other male household members have lost their jobs. However, it has become increasingly harder to do so since earnings in the informal sector have fallen markedly because of the oversupply of labour and diminished demand.

287. Moreover, rising unemployment and poverty in urban areas have reverberated in the countryside, as many extended family members in rural areas depend on remittances from relatives working in the cities (Robb, 1998). This also has been the case with the large number of migrant workers in the countries affected by the crisis. As discussed in chapter III, intraregional migration grew rapidly over the last two decades in the newly industrializing countries of South-East Asia. By mid-1997, there were an estimated 2,500,000 foreign workers in Malaysia, 1,354,000 in Japan, 1,260,000 in Thailand, 450,000 in Singapore and 210,000 in the Republic of Korea, of which a large proportion had an irregular status and were illegal (ILO, 1998b). As the crisis reduced demand for labour, many migrants found themselves unemployed and encouraged to leave. As the stream of remittances has dried up, many rural families have become completely destitute. Recent newspaper reports from Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand, document an increasing number of cases of families in desperation who have sold their daughters into prostitution.

288. Declining incomes and inflation have combined to make it difficult for households to maintain prior nutritional levels. In Indonesia, for example, where it is women's responsibility to provide daily food and household services, declining purchasing power imposes serious problems. Evidence of severe malnutrition has begun to show up in Java, related to the financial crisis (UNFPA, 1998). One study found that within the household, women and children are usually more affected than men by a reduction in the level of consumption caused by economic hardship (Robb, 1998).

289. Psychological stress, heightened during times of economic crisis, places additional burdens, particularly on women, who are socially expected to be emotional caretakers. Given the shallow social safety nets in Asia, job losses and poverty have led to increased reliance on the family, and that has by all indications caused household distress. Suicide rates, substance abuse and domestic violence against women and children are all reported to have increased in the region after the crisis (Shin and Chang, 1999; UNFPA, 1998).

290. The human costs of the financial crisis will clearly be long-lived. According to the Thai Education Ministry, almost 6 per cent of school students or about 500,000 primary and secondary children had been forced to drop out of school. Estimates for Indonesia are even higher (UNFPA, 1998). A disproportionate number of those are likely to be girls. In many Asian countries, as in many other developing countries, families tend to favour boys over girls, and it is likely that they would choose to invest in boys' education rather than girls' if forced to make a choice (Odaga and Heneveld, 1995). Since boys are expected to support them in old age, many parents see the investment in their boys as a pension plan (Greenhalgh, 1985).

291. Deterioration of health care is another dimension of the human costs. For instance, the treatment of HIV and AIDS patients was cut back in public health progr mmes as devaluation drastically increased the cost of imported medical drugs. HIV infection rates are now expected to increase because of reduction in health care as well as increased prostitution. Reproductive health is also threatened. The drastic reductions in government budgets have inhibited even the efforts to provide reproductive health information. An increase in unsafe abortions to terminate unwanted pregnancies and reductions in funding for sexually transmitted diseases (STD) prevention and treatment programmes are reported (UNFPA, 1998).

C. Diminishing role of the state and social protection gap

292. In developed countries, the economic size of the state in relation with national income is considerably higher than in developing countries.[79] In addition to its larger size, public sector activity also has greater scope. A higher share of national income is spent on redistributive programmes, targeting improvements in equity and social protection. Developed countries benefit from a virtuous cycle where the effectiveness of government spending enhances profitable investment opportunities in the private sector, generating growth and prosperity, which provide the resources necessary to finance public expenditures.

293. In developed economies, the economic size of the state has not always been large. Before the Second World War, public spending as a share of GDP was uniformly low in Europe and the United States of America. By 50 years later, however, government spending

[79] In OECD countries, the state generates and spends almost twice the amount of resources, relative to national income per capita, than is managed by the public sector in developing countries (around 48 per cent compared with 26 per cent in 1990).

has risen dramatically to 47 per cent of GDP on average (Rodrik, 1997a). During this period, increases in social spending drove the expansion of the economic size of the public sector, as rapid growth coupled with increased economic openness raised the demands on the state. One of the causes of these trends have been the increased exposure to international economic forces, which, as noted above, are more volatile than those in a closed economy. Not surprisingly, small open economies, such as Belgium and the Netherlands, have had broader and more comprehensive welfare states and higher government spending on social programmes than larger and more closed industrialized economies.

294. Globalization enhances the need for a social safety net for a number of reasons. On the one hand, it tends to increase the turnover rate of labour and thus the number of workers who are in transition. That requires interim and in some cases long-term expenditures, not only for unemployment insurance but also for indirect forms of income support to ensure access to health care and adequate housing. On the other hand, in addition to social protection, globalization also increases the need to invest in education, and training to make sure that a country's labour force is sufficiently adaptable to changing conditions of competition in a global environment.[80] Because most workers do not have the resources to finance their own training and education, again, the state is increasingly called upon to provide the resources needed for human capital investment.[81]

295. Thus, paradoxically, the viability of a growth strategy that relies on openness and market liberalization increasingly depends on the extent to which the state can afford to protect its citizens from the vagaries of the market. The role of the state is critical in sustaining the economic advant ges of an open, competitive environment since business cannot take on the costs of providing social protection if they are to remain competitive.

296. Families and communities are already under increased strain, not only because income inequality and insecurity have risen but also because the informal ties of social solidarity have also been weakened outside and perhaps even inside the nuclear family.

297. Under the conditions of globalization and market liberalization, it appears that the limits on the state's ability to provide social protection and human capital investment have become more pronounced. In addition to the constraints placed on public expenditures, discussed in the context of the deflationary bias above, the ability of the state to tax capital has also diminished.

1. Erosion of the tax base

298. Mobility of capital and the ability of MNCs to seek low-tax environments have eroded the capacity of the state to raise revenue through taxation. Over the last two decades, Governments had been lowering corporate and capital gains taxes around the world. Reductions in top tax rates on capital, evident in the United States of America 1986 tax reform, appear to have had a domino effect. In all OECD countries, except Switzerland and

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[80] These are usually called "active labour market policies". Intended to prevent those who are most negatively affected by change from joining the ranks of the long-term unemployed, they usually comprise measures such as training, public service employment, wage subsidy, support for self-employment, and general employment (job search) services. These have been standard in OECD countries for many years, and are being extended to middle-income and transition countries (Fretwell and others, 1999).

[81] Moreover, to make their country an attractive location for investment, Governments must also invest in physical infrastructure. These public expenditures are in general complementary to private investment because they raise the profitability to private firms. Singapore is an example of a country that has made substantial public infrastructure investments, and many MNCs note that their motivation for locating in that country rather than elsewhere in Asia is in part because of its infrastructure.

Turkey, the top average income tax rate fell from 54 to 42 per cent between 1985 and 1990 (Grunberg, 1998). In many countries, local tax rates on capital have also come down, as many provinces or states competed to attract businesses by lowering taxes or offering tax holidays. Many Governments have tried to bolster declining tax revenues by raising payroll taxes. For instance, in the European Union, payroll taxes rose 20 per cent, while capital gains tax receipts fell by 10 per cent between 1980 and 1993. The same pattern was evident in the United States of America. Rate of taxation has increased on factors that were less mobile, such as labour, and dropped on those that were footloose, such as capital.

299. Similar trends were also observable among developing countries. In order to attract FDIs, in addition to low tax rates, Governments also had to grant tax concession (tax holidays or tax exempt status) to MNCs. Moreover, for many developing countries, trade liberalization and thus the elimination (or reductions) of levies on foreign trade have been a major loss in tax revenue. Given the rudimentary nature of tax administration in many of those countries, the most cost-effective way to collect tax revenues is usually at the border. It has been estimated that the administrative cost of collecting trade taxes amounts to 1 to 3 per cent of GDP compared with 10 per cent for income taxes (World Bank, 1988). In many instances, the tax revenue loss due to trade liberalization might have amounted to up to one third of total tax revenue.

300. Another factor that has adversely affected Governments' ability to tax has been so-called *transfer pricing*. This refers to the ability of international firms to engage in accounting practices that are designed to lower their tax liability. Firms manipulate invoices on intra-firm international trade to ensure that profits show up in the country of lowest tax rates. Conversely, they post their lowest profits in the books of branches in high-tax countries (Tanzi, 1995). Keenly aware of the practice, host Governments have been constrained to maintain competitively low corporate tax rates.

301. Many countries have tried to offset their declining tax revenue, with only partial success, by raising income taxes. The change towards a more regressive tax system, a result of the increased reliance on income and payroll taxes, appear to have led to some erosion in public support for social spending. Throughout the 1980s, in many developed countries, Governments were elected on a political platform to reduce both taxes and government expenditures. During those years, there was much debate as to whether social expenditures had created a perverse incentive structure for the poor, and whether interventions by the state blunted the adjustment capacity of the markets in a period of rapid structural and technological change. The adherents of the neo-liberal ideology, ascendant at the time, thought that the fiscal crisis many countries faced around the world might have also had a silver lining if it forced Governments to trim down the size of their public sector. Many believed that in addition to improving efficiency, the "downsizing" of the state would also solve the problem of political corruption at its root, by eradicating rents created by government intervention in the economy, especially in the developing countries. However, in many instances, a common unintended outcome has been the weakening of already fragile public governance structures.

302. While it is difficult to ascertain causality, there are indications of a connection between weakened public governance structures (and thus administrative capacity to collect taxes) and an increase in underground activity, which by virtue of its nature goes untaxed. For example in OECD countries, estimates of the untaxed economy ranged from 6 to 11 per cent of GDP in 1978, while a more recent estimate for the European Union countries cites 25 per cent of GDP. In developing economies, estimates of untaxed income are significantly higher (Grunberg, 1998).

303. Those trends suggest that a weaker administrative capacity on the part of the state might further depress public revenue by inducing tax evasion. As the pressure mounts to create loopholes or overlook tax regulation in return for illegal payments, bureaucratic institutions can become vulnerable to corrupt outside interests (Chambas, 1994 as cited in Grunberg, 1998). On the one hand, the fiscal difficulties faced by the state can create the perception of a diminished efficacy of tax collection, spurring efforts to evade taxes. On the other hand, declining public sector revenues that squeeze civil service salaries and reduce job security may also make public officials prone to accepting bribes in return for favourable tax treatment.

2. Changing patterns of public spending

304. In all regions of the world, with the possible exception of South Asia, the rising trend of public sector activity as a ratio of national income has come to an end since the mid-1980s (World Bank, 1997). While marginally increasing in OECD countries and in sub-Saharan Africa, government spending as a ratio of GDP has fallen in the Middle East and Latin America, and stayed more or less constant in East Asia. For developing countries as a whole, it fell slightly.

305. In Africa and Latin America, many Governments that had raised finance externally found themselves facing unsustainable budget deficits, as interest rates rose in international markets late in the 1970s. Throughout the 1980s, public expenditure levels in those countries generally fell significantly in absolute terms, even though they remained relatively stable in relation to their respective national incomes, which were falling because of recession. Moreover, public sector expenditure on consumption and investment fell faster than the total budget, because rising debt service payments took a larger share of total public expenditure in those (and, in fact, in all) regions. That has also entailed a reduction in the share of expenditures on health and education in the total government budget, implying a greater reduction as a ratio of national income (Grosh, 1990, p. 66). Of course, in many countries which had rapid population growth, the decline in these expenditures on a per capita basis was even more pronounced.

306. In the difficult recessionary conditions of the 1980s, most developing country Governments chose to cut back on capital investment first, rather than reduce current expenditure on services and social support measures. Inexorably, however, those cutbacks led to deterioration in the existing infrastructure for social programmes. Problems were compounded by subsequent cuts in current expenditure, as the scope for less politically contentious capital expenditure cuts was exhausted.[82] By early in the 1990s, it became apparent that the welfare costs of adjustment were substantial and that these were being borne disproportionately by the most vulnerable segments of the population. Country after country, evidence began to accumulate, showing the adverse welfare effects on the poor and especially on women in poor households.[83]

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[82] In proportional terms, the levels of public expenditure on health and education seem to have stabilized at comparable levels in different regions of the developing world (about 3.4 per cent of GDP on education and 3.7 per cent on health for all developing countries, in 1988-1990 averages). In the lowest-income countries, the figures are lower: 2.8 per cent for education and 2.4 per cent for health (Van Adams and Hartnett, 1996, citing UNDP, 1993).

[83] In the context of structural adjustment, the negative effects of declines in social spending on women's welfare have been amply documented (see next section). However, the pervasiveness and intensity of those adverse effects on welfare are also questioned (World Bank, 1999). On the one hand, government expenditures as a ratio of national income are seen to have stabilized at historically high levels in most developing countries in the 1980s, implying that these were excessive to begin with. On the other hand, it is argued that reductions in social expenditures have not necessarily translated into declines in educational and health status among the population in many countries.

3. Macroeconomics of structural adjustment and gender

307. Faced with severe balance of payments difficulties, many developing countries were forced to implement structural adjustment and macroeconomic stabilization policies in the 1980s. These programmes consisted of, on the one hand, short-term austerity measures aimed at keeping aggregate demand under control to reduce inflation and curb budget and current-account deficits, and, on the other, long-term policies designed to carry out trade liberalization, deregulation and privatization.

308. According to the proponents of those policies, whatever the initial shock that caused the macroeconomic imbalance, the balance of payments crises almost invariably imply a situation where the demand for *tradable goods*[84] exceeds its supply. The solution then must involve a shift in production towards, and in consumption away from, tradable goods. It is argued that the market system, if allowed to work freely, would automatically bring about this result. In other words, it is believed that markets can and will solve the problem, provided that they are flexible enough. Thus, the overall objective of structural adjustment programmes is to improve the responsiveness of the market system by eliminating structural and institutional constraints and rigidities that inhibit market adjustment.

309. Usually, the main target that comes under scrutiny is government intervention in the economy. For instance, government programmes, such as price subsidies, transfer payments or protectionist measures in foreign trade, are criticized not only because they give rise to large budget deficits, thereby fuelling inflation but also because they interfere with the allocative function of the market system by distorting relative prices.

310. The countries caught in the web of debt crisis during the 1980s had to heed such market-oriented advice before they could have access to international financial aid which they desperately needed. In order to improve efficiency, in one country after another price subsidies, public investments on infrastructure and eventually social expenditures on education, health and public services were drastically reduced. Trade and capital accounts were liberalized and public enterprises privatized. The new policies had immediate adverse welfare effects on the poor and especially on women in poor households. They tended to shift societal costs of reproducing and maintaining labour power onto a sphere wherein those costs were no longer visible, except in women's burden of work. Women and the poor were forced to make do with a much diminished household budget in provisioning their and their families' needs. It was found that women significantly increased their participation in the labour force, often in informal employment under insecure and worsening conditions of work, and had to increase their unpaid domestic labour in the face of falling incomes. In other words, women absorbed the adjustment shock by working longer and harder both inside and outside the household. However, their welfare suffered as the increased burden of work exerted a toll on their physical and mental health.[85] Another response of women to structural adjustment was to develop their own organizational and survival networks (see box V.1).

311. While structural adjustment policies were carried out in the name of increasing efficiency, their result might have been increased inefficiency kept out of sight by the invisibility of unpaid domestic labour. For instance, measures to streamline the health sector through user fees that lead to shorter stays in hospital might not increase efficiency, if they

[84] They refer to goods that can be bought or sold in international markets.

[85] For the adverse effects of structural adjustment on women's welfare, see Standing (1989), Elson (1991a; 1991b), Moser (1992; 1996; 1998), Beneria and Roldan (1987), Sen (1991), Beneria and Feldman (1992), Afshar and Dennis (1992), Bakker (1994), Sparr (1994), Cagatay and Ozler (1995), Gonzales de la Rocha (1994), Floro (1995). Also, for a more extensive bibliography, see Afshar and Dennis (1992).

Box V.I
Community kitchens in Lima

In an effort to deal with economic restructuring and urban poverty, women in Lima have developed their own organizations and survival networks. In one example of this kind, the low-income women who belong to the Federacion de Comedores Populares Autogestionarios (FCPA) gather daily in their neighbourhood kitchens and try to feed their families collectively. Throughout Lima, 40,000 women gather at 2,000 sites, rotating leadership, collecting dues, making purchases and preparing meals.

The communal kitchens are the work of an activist network for women. When the first kitchens were formed early in the 1980s, in response to the impact of structural adjustment programmes, they were mainly operated by middle-aged rural migrants. As new adjustment policies gave rise to increased belt-tightening late in the 1980s, the number of kitchens increased from 700 to 1,000. By 1990, many younger and newly impoverished Lima women began joining the kitchens.

In 1988, the kitchens acquired legal status, as they were organized into federations and confederations. A federation such as FCPA represents the movement to government officials, purchases wholesale inputs, organizes micro-enterprise activities, and elaborates and transmits a broader view of gender and women's community participation. Some kitchens receive support from the Catholic Church or political parties, while others are more autonomous.

Women often participate in such organizations out of economic necessity, but once they enter the organizational framework they also begin to mobilize around political and social issues, getting involved in community-level decision-making and interacting with the local Government, religious communities, urban social movements and the private sector.

Source: Lind, 1997.

are giving rise to longer periods of convalescence at home and greater expenditures of unpaid (non-monetized) caring labour. Similarly, even though it might be more cost-effective for health authorities to pick a site for a new hospital outside city limits, the centre of town could prove to be a more socially optimal location if the time patients and their visitors would have to spend in travelling to and from the hospital is made a part of the calculus. In the case of the macroeconomy, the problem is quite similar. There is no way of assessing the true impact of policies on efficiency at the macroeconomic level, as long as the unpaid sector remains invisible in the national income accounts.[86]

[86] In its assessment of the effectiveness of adjustment programmes in increasing the overall efficiency of the economy, the World Bank relies on the statistics of incremental capital output ratio. A fall in this ratio is interpreted to reflect an improvement in the overall efficiency of the economy. However, incremental capital-output ratio statistics are typically calculated from statistics that ignore unpaid work. Thus, given the invisibility of the reproductive sector a fall in this ratio might just as well hide increasing inefficiency (Elson, 1995).

VI. Conclusion and gender-aware policy framework

312. Growing international concern over the negative welfare effects of economic adjustment on women prompted the General Assembly[87] to request the Secretary-General to examine the impact of current trends and policies on the overall economic and social situation of women. Careful examining was to be made of (a) the poor conditions of work for women, particularly women in developing countries, and (b) the impact of reduced expenditure on social services on women's opportunities for education, health and childcare.

313. In response to this request, the current *1999 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development* has set out to reflect on the recent labour market trends in the world within the context of globalization, in particular how the world of work is being transformed from a gender point of view. It has found that:

(a) Women have been incorporated into paid employment in greater numbers in the past two decades, but usually under conditions inferior to those for men;

(b) Costs of economic adjustment have been borne disproportionately by women, especially poor women;

(c) The welfare demands placed on the family and women appear to have increased, especially in developing countries, because of a reduction in social sector expenditures.

314. It is difficult to make broad generalizations about globalization, especially in terms of whether its overall impact on gender equality has been positive or negative. Forces unleashed by globalization have given rise to new opportunities that can potentially be empowering to women, on the one hand, and economic conditions which are inimical to gender equality, including increased economic volatility, job insecurity and loss of livelihood, on the other hand.

315. Below, after a summary of recent labour market trends discussed in the previous chapters, the discussion turns to (a) an evaluation of their likely impact on gender relations, and (b) the ways in which economic policy can be made gender-aware in order to minimize the negative effects of globalization while consolidating its benefits.

A. Summary of labour market trends

316. Since the 1980s, the growth of the female labour force has been substantially higher than that of men throughout the world, except in Africa. In developed countries, male-dominated manual occupations, mostly low-skill manufacturing jobs, have been disappearing at a rapid rate. The decreasing number of manufacturing jobs that have remained, which continue to be male dominated, have progressively become high-skilled. In the past two decades, much of the increase in employment has occurred in the service sector. Given women's heavy concentration in those sectors the female share of employment has increased markedly (see chap. III). A second trend, gaining momentum especially in the 1990s, has been the polarization of jobs, both in manufacturing and in the expanding servicing sector, in terms of their requisite labour skills. Some of the service jobs, mostly in information and knowledge-sensitive sectors, have required high skills, while the rest have concentrated in low-skilled, low-wage, labour-intensive sectors. Finally, part-time jobs and other irregular forms of employment, mostly in the low-pay end of the service sector, have accounted for much of the increase in female employment in services (chap. III.B).

[87] In resolution 49/161.

317. In the developing world, the salient aspect of female employment is the fact that the majority of women are still in agriculture. In developing countries as a whole, the percentage of the total labour force in agriculture — which remains above 50 per cent and was about 70 per cent in 1965 — has been falling very rapidly in the last 20 years. However, as discussed in chapter IV, in some regions men have been moving out of agriculture faster than women, increasing the relative concentration of women on land. This appears to be more common in countries where the per-capita level of income has been stagnant or falling in the past two decades. Another important trend has been the almost universal increase in women's share in the total non-agricultural employment, especially in the "high-growth countries" that have been industrializing rapidly in recent years.

318. Among the export-led industrializers that make up much of the group of high-growth countries, the orientation of manufacturing production towards exports has generally been associated with an increasing share of female employment (chap. II.A). However, a growing body of evidence suggests that the employment effects of globalization on women have been weakening, at least in the *formal* economy, since perhaps as early as the late 1980s. Two reasons appear to have been important. First, in many middle- and upper-middle-income countries, labour demand has been shifting towards relatively high-skill manufacturing; while employment growth in traditionally low-skill sectors, such as textiles and apparel, where women workers predominate, has been declining. Second, throughout the developing countries as a whole, the *informal* sector has been gaining in importance in new employment creation, especially for women (chap. III.B). According to some observers, the increased prominence of the informal sector might simply be an artifact, reflecting our improved ability to record and measure irregular forms of employment. However, much agreement does exist about a vibrant new informal sector in the developing world, being shaped by the new market realities of globalization and technological change.

B. Impact on gender relations

319. In assessing the gender impact of those new trends, it is not surprising that women's participation in paid employment, given its rapid increase, has been the focus of much discussion in the past. There were two overriding themes in the early debates. One was the belief that increased employment would give women greater autonomy and status, eventually enhancing their influence within the household. The other was the concern about the inferior conditions under which women were being incorporated into paid employment. It was feared that unequal burden of work at home and the marginal position in paid employment at work could simply reinforce each other, confining women to the role of secondary earner in the family. If women continued to have primary responsibility for housework and childcare, the effects of increased employment could hardly go beyond having to cope with an onerous "double day".

320. Although those themes continue to motivate policy discussions today, the terms of the current debate have been shifting. It is generally agreed that women's wages and working conditions still fall significantly short relative to those of men almost everywhere around the globe, even after accounting for the differences between women and men in education, labour skills and labour market experience. But disagreement exists about whether, where and which of those gender inequalities might have been closing in recent years, and more importantly on what all that means. The evidence which shows a closing gender wage gap in the United States of America and some other developed countries since the mid-1980s

seems robust and widely agreed upon (see chap. II.C).[88] Similarly, the finding that occupational segregation by gender has generally been falling around the world during the last decade and a half does not seem controversial. By contrast, the evidence from developing countries on the direction of change in the gender wage gap is mixed and no agreement exists about whether a positive overall trend exists at all.

321. Just as in the proverbial question about the glass being half *full* or half *empty*, the trends lend themselves to two quite different interpretations. According to one, globalization and processes associated with it such as intensified competition, economic restructuring, labour market liberalization and potentially higher economic growth are having a generally positive effect in reducing gender inequalities in labour markets. This view is based on two propositions: (a) sex discrimination is the main cause of the gender wage gap which cannot be explained statistically by differences in education, skills and labour market experience between women and men; (b) discrimination is economically costly to employers. Given those propositions, in the face of increased competition (caused by globalization and labour market liberalization) employers will find it increasingly harder to afford to discriminate. By contrast, when sheltered from competition, inertia if nothing else will cause businesses to forgo the potential benefits they could realize by eradicating gender — and all other forms of discrimination — in their operations. Thus, according to this view, enhancing competition by reducing protective regulations and institutions in labour markets not only improves economic efficiency but also benefits disenfranchised groups, such as women and minorities, at the expense of the well-entrenched *insiders*.

322. The other view, by contrast, holds that labour market liberalization and flexibilization have simply been means to increase the ability of businesses to survive in the face of intensified competition worldwide, by reducing their relative tax burden and remuneration of labour. The costs of economic adjustment and change are thus shifted onto the most vulnerable who could least resist. According to this view, the evidence of a closing gender wage gap in some developed countries reflects more a deterioration in men's conditions of employment than an improvement in women's position in the labour market, in other words, a "downward harmonization" between women and men. Even the general rise in female share of employment might involve a deterioration in well-being since in numerous instances it results from the "distress sales" of labour by women who are under increased pressure to support their families because of reductions in men's earnings. Looked at from this point of view, global economic integration and labour market "*flexibilization*" are seen to have led to increased poverty and inequality both within and between countries, causing greater economic uncertainty and income insecurity for those who possess little that is of marketable value. Even countries that were held up as success stories of globalization until recently have proved to be highly vulnerable to economic crisis caused by outside shocks. It is argued that women in poverty are usually affected the most by these ill-effects since the family is the *last* and — in many developing countries — the *only* refuge for those who are left behind by the rapidly changing economic conditions.

323. Another new aspect of the current debate in relation with the earlier one is perhaps the greater emphasis placed on the importance of women's empowerment in achieving lasting gains towards gender equality in labour markets. However, whether and how the *new* market economy contributes to women's empowerment remains an open question. Those who generally have *optimistic* expectations about the benefits of intensified market relations argue that private sector development opens up new opportunities for entrepreneurial activity

[88] However, in some other developed countries such as Japan, it has been rising. In Europe, the evidence is mixed.

empowering to women. By contrast, for the *skeptics*, what is empowering is the social networks women enter and create in the context of paid employment, be it formal or informal.[89] They doubt that increased participation in the labour market will by *itself* have a liberating effect on women, recognizing that it might very well give rise to new forms of gender subordination at work at a time when the old ones within the household are eroding. However, they stress that under certain conditions, by providing a basis for women to organize collectively, increased participation in employment can be a crucial first step in self-empowerment, which could be the main source of lasting improvements in gender relations both within and outside the household.

324. On a more ominous note, it is also argued that the increased burden on the household in many developing countries has led to survival strategies that are potentially self-destructive. Faced with an erosion in its resource base, households have had to shift to less sustainable or riskier combinations of economic activity. Thus, certain kinds of survival strategies (for instance, those that involve the withdrawing of children from school so that they can contribute to the family budget), while possibly effective in the short run in reducing income insecurity, have been inimical for the long-term interests of the household. Moreover, according to this view, those strategies, which are often borne out of desperation, accentuate gender inequalities since households are likely to take prevailing gender prejudices as given in their economic decisions, and thus choose to invest their limited resources on, say, boys' education and health because returns to girls' education in labour markets are much less.

325. Finally, the current debate is taking place at a time when globalization is transforming the very environment within which public policy is conducted. A major policy challenge in our era is how to prevent individual countries from engaging in injurious competition on the basis of cheap labour and lax labour standards. As the direction of trade and investment flows in the world economy has increasingly come to depend on cost differences among countries, policies aiming at improving labour standards in individual countries have become harder to implement. Along with the increased need for policy coordination and cooperation at both the regional and international levels, for the reasons discussed in chapter V, the capacity of the state to address social ills appears to have diminished. While this has generally been detrimental to women's welfare, it might also have coincided with the emergence of new opportunities for the women's movement. The influence of women's organizations, non-governmental organizations, and other civil society organizations seem to have risen around the world, as the unprecedented possibilities for direct international networking at the grass-roots level are opened up by the global diffusion of information and communications technologies.

C. Towards a gender-aware policy agenda

326. A cardinal rule of economic policy-making involves the principle that policies should target problems at their source, rather than dealing with their manifestations. Many gender biases in economic life emanate from gender inequalities at the household level and in social attitudes and norms. Thus, long-term solutions can only be achieved if and when these inequalities are eradicated at their source. Creating conditions of equality in sharing reproductive responsibilities and decision-making within the household; eradicating legal,

[89] Over recent years, the two positions have seemed to overlap to some extent over the successful schemes of microcredit that had involved the active participation and organization of rural women in some South Asian countries.

institutional and cultural barriers that prevent or disadvantage women's participation in economic activity and decision-making at the political level are just a few examples of the objectives that social policies and legislation must target.[90]

327. However, in the meantime, this does not preclude the need to make economic policy gender-aware to promote women's equal access to economic resources, education and job training. It needs to be borne in mind that although gender equality is an end in itself, it is also a means for economic development. There is, by now, ample evidence showing that gender biases and inequalities in the labour market, in access to credit, in the distribution of wealth and income and in decision-making can act as barriers in the effective and productive use of human resources in meeting human needs. According to one estimate, total output could be increased considerably by eliminating gender discrimination in occupational patterns and pay (Tzannatos, 1992). Likewise, it is found that the adverse effect of gender gaps in education on economic growth can be substantial (King and Hill, 1995). Evidence suggests that countries that underinvest in their women, and fail to lower gender inequalities, "pay a price for it in terms of slower growth and lower income" (Dollar and Gatti, 1999). Gender-aware economic policies that promote equality between women and men also increase economic growth.

328. Globalization has given rise to ambiguous and at times contradictory effects on gender equality. The main policy challenge of our era is how to benefit from forces unleashed by globalization while shielding ourselves from their harmful effects. For instance, flexibilization of employment has been effective in pulling women into paid work and thus enhancing the gender mobility of labour, but, at the same time, it has also been the means by which the costs of market volatility have been shifted onto the workers, mostly women, in precarious forms of employment. Similarly, the potential ability to eradicate gender inequalities in human capabilities has increased markedly, on the one hand, thanks to the enhanced mobility of capital and new information technologies associated with globalization, and on the other, rising inequality and poverty resulting from an inequitable distribution of adjustment costs have given rise to major disinvestments in human capabilities in many countries, with adverse gender effects.

329. Given the nature of such mixed effects, it might be useful to address economic policy in terms of the three levels at which gender affects economic development (see introduction) in (a) enhancing the intersectoral and spatial mobility of labour in order to better reallocate labour, (b) minimizing adjustment costs, and (c) investing in human capabilities. However, in the context of globalization, such policies might also require coordination at both the macroeconomic and international levels.

1. Enhancing gender equality and mobility of labour

330. The era of globalization is characterized by the curtailment of labour mobility. Female labour mobility is especially curtailed because of the persistence of gender inequality. Therefore, as part of a gender-aware policy agenda, the following corrective actions should be undertaken:

[90] An increasing number of countries prohibit discrimination or require equal treatment between men and women in their national constitutions and/or their labour codes. The basic principles of equality for women workers were set out in two of the ILO's seven fundamental Conventions: the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), and the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111). Those two conventions are among the most widely ratified of all ILO Conventions, with 135 and 129 ratifications, respectively, at the end of 1997.

(a) *Equal opportunity policies and programmes should be enacted to reduce occupational segregation by sex*. Policies should assist men to enter into traditionally "female" occupations as well as assist women in entering traditionally "male" occupations. Affirmative action and equal opportunity programmes, as well as anti-discrimination laws, are important for breaking down barriers based on sex stereotypes. Provision of childcare and increased education and training for women in non-traditional subjects are also important. The provision of pre-employment and on-the-job training and retraining in vocational and technical skills can be effective in enhancing the employability of workers and providing a means to implement an equal opportunity strategy;

(b) *Policies must make work family friendly*. With the increased participation of women in paid employment, the need to enact family-enabling policies, including family leave and sick leave for care of family members, is greater than ever. Policies should encourage men and women to take equal responsibility for caring labour necessary to ensure well-being within the family;

(c) *Support services should be provided to help women and other disadvantaged target groups both to secure and to keep jobs*. Having primary responsibility for domestic chores and care of children can reduce women's ability to participate fully in the labour market. Policies should therefore encourage employers to help workers meet family obligations through the provision of workplace crèches, mobile nursing care and sponsored school holiday programmes, among other possibilities. Government or community support or coordination are often crucial to enhance such employer initiatives;

(d) Geographical labour-mobility assistance is important generally for dealing with imbalances between the location of labour supply and demand. But such assistance, in the form of job vacancy information, realistic information on working conditions (especially if the job is overseas) and active job search assistance, is especially important for women from rural areas and those considering overseas migration, because they tend to have lower levels of education and less access to information than men. Assistance for women preparing for work in overseas labour markets is needed, including measures to protect them from exploitation and abuses.

2. Mitigating adjustment costs by bolstering employment security

331. The adjustment process is accompanied by costs which are disproportionately borne by women. It is therefore necessary to implement the following actions with a view to mitigating the costs of adjustment and bolster employment and income security of women and the families:

(a) *Policies must be introduced to allow women workers to consolidate the benefits of increased paid employment through access to basic worker rights* — freedom of association and freedom from discrimination and coercion, in line with the fundamental international conventions of the ILO. Workers in the export manufacturing sector of many developing countries, and in export processing zones, should enjoy the same labour rights as enjoyed by others in the domestic economy;

(b) *Policies must be directed at improving the stability of work*. One way to achieve this goal is to enact policies that require employers to extend benefits to part-time and temporary workers on a pro-rated basis. Moreover, social insurance policies (such as unemployment insurance) that extend coverage to temporary, part-time, informal sector, and home workers are also needed. Coverage of informal sector workers is particularly challenging but important since most unprotected workers operate in that sector. Three avenues have been explored to reach such workers: (a) specially designed (self-financed)

social insurance schemes, (b) social funds, (c) extension and reform of the formal sector social insurance schemes;

(c) *Policies should address the needs of women who are over-represented in the informal sector*, giving support to self-employment, entrepreneurial skills development and small-enterprise support programmes that target women. In some circumstances, self-employment and small businesses can be a potentially viable alternative for wage employment. In yet others, it is employment of last resort. Various organizations, such as producer and worker associations and small business credit institutions, play an important role in enhancing productivity and incomes in the informal sector. To promote workers' living standards within that sector, policies should support efforts to mobilize and train women in establishing and sustaining group activities, such as procuring, maintaining and managing common production facilities and marketing of products;

(d) *Especially in the least developed countries, women's property rights in land and other assets need to be enhanced.* Policies should encourage collective land purchases by local women's groups, and other schemes that give women greater control over land. Also, measures need to be taken to support women's claims to cash earnings from labour. One simple measure might involve a scheme where payments for export crops, might be handled through local purchasing centres which reward each family member directly according to their labour input, rather than being made directly to male farmers.

3. Gender inequality and investment in human resources

332. Increased turnover of labour, an outcome of the flexibilization of employment, can have the effect of reducing the incentives of firms to invest in human resources. All businesses benefit from skill improvement in the labour force, but individually each firm would be reluctant to invest in the upgrading of a resource if it could not be the sole likely beneficiary. If workers on average cannot be expected to remain at a job for long, their employers would be more reluctant to invest in them. Under conditions of market liberalization, just as MNC commitments (both implicit and explicit) to their workers diminish, so do workers' loyalty to the company and the expected duration of their tenure.

333. Women workers are likely to be disproportionately disadvantaged by such trends, because a much greater proportion of women than men work in flexible jobs with higher turnover, and employers often think that women are more likely to leave their jobs than men for childbearing, marriage and the care of the children or other family members. Thus, policies are needed:

(a) To encourage firms to raise productivity by investing in workers rather than relying on cost-cutting to increase their competitiveness;

(b) To promote equal access to training and retraining among women and men.

334. Specific policy measures can include (a) setting targets (quota percentages or actual numbers) for girls in various types of training programmes, particularly encouraging them to go into scientific and technical fields and assisting them to break existing patterns of job segregation; (b) special measures to facilitate the entry of workers with family responsibilities into labour-market-based training and retraining programmes; (c) flexibility in the design, delivery and location of training courses and the provision of childcare services as integral components of such programmes; (d) establishment of more effective linkages between training systems and labour markets, so that women are trained in employable skills and can put their training to economic use; (e) specially targeted measures to provide entrepreneurial training for women in self-employment; and (f) fostering of access to new jobs based on new technologies in faster-growing sectors of the economy, which

may prove more effective for gender equality than access to traditionally male jobs in largely declining sectors (ILO, 1998b).

4. Engendering macroeconomic policies

335. A general presumption prevalent among economists and policy makers is that macroeconomic policy objectives and instruments are both gender neutral. However, some economists have argued that the macroeconomic policies which were being implemented throughout the 1980s in the developing world, in the context of structural adjustment policies, have had gender asymmetric effects (chap. V.C). Similarly, in the 1990s, macroeconomic policies have given rise to a *deflationary bias*, with gender asymmetric results (chap. V.A)

336. It was also recognized that the direction of causation between the macroeconomy and gender relations could go both ways. A line of analysis that began with the recognition of the non-neutral gender effects of macroeconomic policies by feminist economists evolved in a direction where it focused on the feedback effects of gender relations on the macroeconomy. The conceptual starting points for the new gender-aware approaches to macroeconomic analysis can be summarized in three main propositions (Cagatay and others, 1995):

(a) Although social institutions may not be intrinsically gendered themselves, they bear and transmit gender biases. Being socially constructed institutions, "free markets" also reflect and reinforce gender inequalities;

(b) The cost of reproducing and maintaining the labour force in a given society remains invisible, so long as the scope of economic activity does not include unpaid "reproductive" labour. Thus, unpaid work needs to be made visible and the economic meaning of work redefined to include unpaid reproductive labour;

(c) Gender relations play an important role in the division of labour, the distribution of work, income, wealth and productive inputs with important macroeconomic implications. By implication, economic behaviour is also gendered.

337. Because it takes the legal and institutional structure of the economy as given, traditional macroeconomic analysis ends up being gender-blind rather than gender-neutral. It fails to take into account male biases in labour market legislation, in property rights and inheritance law, all of which restrict and shape the economic activity of women.

338. Fiscal policy is a good example of how macroeconomic policies need to be and can be scrutinized with respect to their gender effects (Elson, 1997b). In countries as diverse as Australia, Barbados, Canada, South Africa and the United Kingdom, women's budget statements and gender-sensitive budget initiatives have been or are being developed as a device for making macroeconomic or fiscal policies gender aware. They are used to review and analyse national budgets and expenditures to determine which groups benefit from fiscal policies, and whether biases against women, poor people or other disadvantaged groups are built into them. In these efforts, the ultimate objective has been to make macroeconomic policy responsive to the needs of the disfranchised groups and women.[91]

[91] See Budlender and others (1998) and Elson (1997b); see also the proceedings of a conference entitled "Pro-poor, gender- and environment-sensitive budgets", organized by UNDP and UNIFEM, June 1999, accessible from Web site <http:/www.undp.poverty/>.

5. International measures for an enabling policy environment

339. As discussed above, concern about attracting capital flows and international competitiveness can constrain macroeconomic policies at the national level. Similarly, as the direction of capital and trade flows in the world economy has increasingly come to depend on cost differences among countries, it might have become harder to deploy policies that aim at improving labour standards in individual countries. In the context of globalization, international policy coordination might increasingly be required to prevent a "race to the bottom" among individual countries vying for advantage in world trade and capital flows. Thus, to be viable in the long run, the macroeconomic and active labour-market policy objectives and measures discussed above need to be accompanied by a set of international measures, as follows:

(a) *Trade policy initiatives need to identify their likely social impact beyond producer interests and to include broadly conceived welfare support measures.* The gender impact is a well defined and highly important part of the social impact and development. Trade policy reviews of the World Trade Organization (WTO) should therefore include consideration of the gender impact of existing and proposed trade policies;

(b) *Universal implementation of core labour standards is required.* Core labour standards include freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour, the elimination of child labour, and the elimination of discrimination in employment. The Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, adopted by the ILO in 1998, calls for an international monitoring mechanism to assist individual States in overcoming obstacles in the implementation of core labour standards;

(c) *Stabilization of capital flows is necessary to prevent excess volatility and economic disruption.* While discussion of specific measures is beyond the scope of the present *Survey*, the general direction of change must be to construct "speed bumps" that slow outflows and inflows of capital.[92] An added benefit of international coordination on the regulation of capital flows might be to enable countries to ease tight monetary and fiscal policies, which raise returns for participants in international financial markets but slow economic growth;

(d) *International coordination to encourage adequate global economic demand must be cultivated.* This would respond to the deflationary bias in macroeconomic policy that has become evident in recent years.

[92] For a discussion of the various methods of stabilizing capital flows, see Blecker (1999).

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